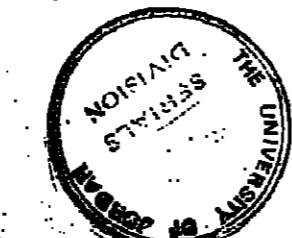


Kohl party suffers in east

BERLIN (AFP) — The ex-communists and the Social Democrats trounced the ruling party of Chancellor Helmut Kohl in municipal elections in former East Germany's biggest state Sunday, according to a poll projection. The party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the revamped East German Communist Party, won 21.8 per cent of the vote in Brandenburg state, according to the televised Infas poll projection. In the last municipal election in the state in May 1990, a few months before German reunification, the PDS led by Lothar Bisky (formerly the SED which ruled East Germany) won 16.5 per cent. Mr. Bisky said the poll was a "fantastic result" for his party and a signal for next year's national elections. The comeback was at the expense of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of Chancellor Kohl, which won only 20.6 per cent of the vote against 31.8 per cent polled in May 1990, according to the Infas poll. The national opposition Social Democratic Party (SPD) led by Rudolf Scharping appeared to have done even better. It was credited with 33.8 per cent, well up from its 28.1 per cent in 1990, making it the strongest party.



Jordanian Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordanian Foundation
جوردان تايمز بيوكة سيكس، بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرائي

Pentagon official visits Kuwait

KUWAIT (AFP) — A U.S. Pentagon official met Sunday with Kuwaiti Prime Minister Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah during his tour of allies in the Middle East, the Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) reported. The meeting was attended by Kuwaiti Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem, the agency said without giving details of the talks. U.S. State Under-Secretary of Defence for Policy Frank Wisner arrived in Kuwait from Saudi Arabia where he conferred with King Fahd. He was also expected to visit Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, all members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Mr. Wisner said in Cairo on Thursday that Iraq and Iran were the two remaining threats to U.S. interests in the Middle East. His tour was aimed at reassuring U.S. allies that President Bill Clinton will stick by Washington's commitment to defend the region. The U.S. official also said U.S. military aid to Israel, Egypt and the Gulf countries would not be changed.

Volume 18 Number 5480

AMMAN MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1993, JUMADA AL THANI 22, 1414

Price: 150 Fils

Tough ride seen for Cabinet as confidence debate begins

Deputies assail government over its conduct of elections and for keeping them out of Cabinet

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday began debating a vote of confidence in the government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali amidst indications that the Cabinet will have to fight hard before it could win what is expected to be a narrow mandate.

Deputies and observers said the government will not be able to win more than 45 to 47 votes of confidence when the 80 lawmakers cast their votes at the end of the session, which is expected to last until Wednesday.

The government came under fire from deputies who opposed its participation in the peace process and accused the government of showing disrespect for the legislature, manipulating the Nov. 8 elections to its favour and violating the spirit of the democratisation process.

But Dr. Majali and his Cabinet won praise from some of the 19 deputies who took the floor Sunday for what they called the honesty and fairness of the elections, the Cabinet's administrative reform programme and the comprehensiveness of its policy statement.

Even deputies who indicated that they would vote in favour of the government showered it with demands for better services and more investment in their constituencies as well as economic and administrative reforms.

Common among the demands of deputies who spoke Sunday were calls for pursuing better Arab relations, support for the Palestinian people and a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and an

end to the 40-month-old sanctions against Iraq.

Deputies also demanded that the government introduce no new taxes, deal effectively with poverty and unemployment, raise salaries and pay more attention to the agricultural and industrial sectors.

Loyalty to His Majesty King Hussein was also pledged by deputies who attacked the government as well as those who indicated they would support it. Calls for strengthening national unity and guaranteeing equal rights for all citizens were also made during the session.

Maan Deputy Abdul Karim Kabariti set the tone of the session when he severely criticised Dr. Majali for failing to respond to what he described as the legislature's overtures to start a cooperative relationship with the executive authority before he reshuffled the government Wednesday.

Mr. Kabariti said that during a meeting the Progressive Democratic Coalition (PDC) held with Dr. Majali before the government change was introduced, deputies showed their inclination to work with the government but Dr. Majali wanted separation.

This reflects "a way of thinking that believes in the separation among the authorities to the extent of no cooperation," said Mr. Kabariti, a former Cabinet minister.

The PDC met with Dr. Majali but the meeting provided no answers... Dr. Majali manoeuvred us but did not negotiate with us," said Mr. Kabariti, who is expected to abstain from voting.

Tafieel Deputy Mohammad Daoudieh, whose speech included the strongest criticism of Dr. Majali, said the prime

minister deliberately and unjustifiably ignored the House when he did not negotiate the government reshuffle with the deputies.

"There is no doubt that Dr. Majali contributed to harming the image of the Chamber of Deputies," said Mr. Daoudieh, who also accused the government of nepotism, interfering in the elections and harming national unity by introducing the one-person, one-vote formula into the electoral process.

Mr. Daoudieh said that members of the Al Ahd Party, led by Deputy Abdul Hadi Al Majali, were disproportionately represented in the government which he called the government of Al Ahd.

The government is a centre of power for Al Ahd, he said. It is a government of bureaucrats that does not recognise the authority of the House, he added.

"Democracy is in danger," said Mr. Daoudieh, who is expected to withhold confidence from the government.

"The truth shows that many of the members of this Cabinet belong to one party, and the practices of this government and some of the ministers in it were aimed to serve this party," independent Islamist Deputy Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat (Irbid) said.

Mr. Tubeishat said the government greatly harmed national unity by taking a number of measures that spread fear among the public, especially amending the election Law.

He said the government proved incapable of holding a national debate on the appropriateness of changing the Election Law and for amending it after dissolving the 11th Parlia-

ment.

"This House later came to face a government that takes it very lightly," said Dr. Tubeishat, who is also expected to withhold confidence from the government.

Dr. Tubeishat said the government violated the norms by not resigning after conducting the elections, saying the prime minister refused to acknowledge that it was a transitional government and insisted that the Cabinet is "an eternal one."

Declaring that his position will be "unsupportive of the government," Deputy Ali Abdul Al Ragheb (Amman, Third District) said Dr. Majali's ministerial team will not be able to effectively deal with the economic and social challenges facing the country.

"The Cabinet lacks the team spirit; its objectives are not clear and (there was no) care to choose ministers who are capable of shouldering the responsibilities and hammering out suitable solutions to our many problems and issues," said Mr. Abdul Ragheb.

Islamic Action Front (IAF) bloc member Bader Al Riasi gave an insight into the kind of criticism other IAF deputies will level against the government with a speech that attacked every aspect of the government's work.

Mr. Riasi (Maan) attacked the government for allegedly interfering in the elections, dissolving the 11th Parliament, and changing the Election Law in a way that harmed national unity.

The government practices "give us reason to question the (seriousness) of the democratic, shoura process," he said.

(Continued on page 10)



Lower House Speaker Taher Al Masri Sunday addresses the House in session (Petra photo)



Lawmakers fail to impress galleries

By Suhair Obaidat
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The scattered spectators who occupied the galleries of the domed Parliament House on Sunday were not exactly impressed by the performance of deputies during the first day of the vote of confidence session and many thought that the speeches of the people's representatives lacked much substance and depth.

Most of the audience interviewed by the Jordan Times thought although some deputies were outright in addressing various issues, the mood was far less hostile than that which dominated the vote of confidence session of the Mudar Badran government in

1989. "So far, the speeches lacked political substance and most of them included personal demands as if to impress their (the deputies') constituencies. This reflects a tremendous level of political ignorance and apathy among deputies," said Abdul Aziz Kabariti, a hotel owner and the brother of Deputy Abdul Kareem Kabariti (Maan).

Mohammad Saleh, an employee at the Ministry of Telecommunications, said: "Now there is more understanding of the democratisation process than before and the emphasis is on matters of daily life, like unemployment, rather than political issues, mainly the peace process."

Mr. Saleh, like most govern-

ment employees attending the session, is there to prepare answers to expected questions and demands by deputies, each in his/her specialty, to be included in the government's statement at the end of the discussions later this week.

Yousef Sardi, a merchant and member of the board of directors of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, said it was his duty, as a person elected to represent the trade sector in the country, "to watch the democratic institution in action and observe its performance, especially when it comes to issues of economic nature."

Munawer Abbadi, an employee at the Jordanian Cooperative Organisation, said he was attending the session "because I am interested in what

the deputies have to say but I do not believe that there has been much change in the way deputies tackle different issues since the beginning of the democratisation process in 1989."

Tamam Al Ghoor, who works at the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation, said the vote of confidence session should concentrate on discussing the government policy statement rather than specific demands of the deputies' constituencies.

"Some speeches contained direct attacks of the government and lacked objectivity," she said.

Nora Anani, wife of Jawad (Continued on page 10)

King and Arafat hold talks ahead of Christopher visit

PLO under pressure to accept deadline delay

By Lamis K. Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat met here yesterday for talks on Jordanian-Palestinian coordination and relations ahead of a meeting today between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chairman and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The focus of the Jordanian-Palestinian talks, according to the Jordan News agency, Petra, was "the latest developments in the peace process and the future relations between Jordan and the PLO within the context of comprehensive Arab coordination based on Israeli implementation of international resolutions and the achievement of peace which ensures the return of the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, to the Arabs."

Mr. Arafat, who arrived aboard an Air Algérie plane, was received at the airport by Deputy Prime Minister Maan Abu Nowar and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan and the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan as well as other officials.

No details were immediately available from the King's talks with Mr. Arafat, but it was expected that a draft Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement figured high in their discussions.

Mr. Arafat's arrival here was preceded by a report that the PLO chairman was ready to accept a two-week delay of the Dec. 13 beginning of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho under the Sept. 13 Israeli-PLO autonomy agree-

ment, the key snags holding up agreement in the ongoing Israel-PLO negotiations.

"Arafat does not prefer a delay and will resist it," one PLO official said. "But a postponement for a limited time could be acceptable if major problems are addressed."

The key obstacles include the release of Palestinian prisoners, control over crossing points and the size of the Jericho area that will come under Palestinian self-rule.

PLO officials said that Mr. Arafat would also insist on at least a beginning of a partial withdrawal from the Gaza Strip on Dec. 13 as a prerequisite to defuse the rising tensions following the Israeli crackdown on the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) as well as with his own Fatah group.

"Arafat cannot afford to allow Dec. 13 to pass just like any other date. This will jeopardise the credibility and the constituency of the peace process in the occupied territories," said a Fatah official.

According to well-informed Palestinian sources a possible scenario to break the current impasse is to arrange for a meeting between Mr. Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Dec. 12 to solve some of the sticking points.

An agreement on the release of a big number of Palestinian prisoners and an Israeli commitment to complete its troops pullout by April 13, as agreed in the Sept. 13 accord could help break the deadlock and enable Mr. Arafat to accept the Israeli-suggested delay.

The PLO Executive Committee, which concluded its meetings in Tunis on Friday, has reiterated its refusal to accept an Israeli delay.

Mr. Arafat was expected to ask Mr. Christopher to pressure Israel to abide by the accord.

The Palestinian leader was planning to put forward conditions to resume negotiations with Israel that involve Israeli

confidence-building measures and Palestinian control over the crossing points.

But according to well-informed sources, the PLO has already been notified, through American and other channels, that Mr. Christopher was likely to support the Israeli demands to maintain control over the crossing points — at least between Jordan and the West Bank during the self-rule interim period, since the border areas would still be under Israeli command.

Mr. Arafat's visit to Jordan is viewed as extremely crucial to improving coordination between the two sides that has gravely suffered since the PLO signed its secret agreement with Israel without consulting with Jordan, which was at the time its partner in a joint delegation.

Over the last two months PLO and Jordanian officials have been working on a draft economic agreement mainly covering monetary policies to regulate relations between Jordan and the future Palestinian entity.

The last draft agreement was reached last month after both Mr. Arafat and Jordanian officials introduced modifications on an initial draft of basic ideas worked out by the head of the economic department and the PLO chief negotiator in Oslo, Ahmad Korieh, and Jawad Al Anani, then minister of state.

According to PLO officials, neither the PLO Executive Committee nor Mr. Arafat has formally ratified the agreement.

The PLO leader is said to be reluctant to bind himself to any final agreement with Jordan prior to clarifying the shape of the Palestinian autonomy.

He has been criticised by some of his colleagues for not entering an agreement with Jordan to boost Palestinian efforts to disengage the Palestinian economy from Israeli domination.

(Continued on page 5)

Negotiating teams race against time

CAIRO (Agencies) — Palestinian negotiating chief Nabil Shaath said his team and Israel began "intense" bargaining Sunday in order to turn the Palestinian autonomy accord into reality by next week's deadline.

The two sides were trying to break the deadlock over plans for an Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho "within the time given," Dr. Shaath said, adding they got down to "intense work" expected to last until Thursday.

Under the autonomy accord signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Washington in September, Israel is to start the troop withdrawal by Dec. 13 and the PLO is to move in its own police force.

In the Egyptian Sinai town of El Arish, the two sides resumed their discussions on the transfer of administrative powers to the Palestinians in the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

The PLO has insisted that Israel start to withdraw its troops by Dec. 13 and urged Washington and Moscow, co-sponsors of the peace talks, to help implement Palestinian autonomy.

But Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has said it could take another week or two beyond the mid-December deadline to reach a clear-cut agreement and has rejected the call for American intervention.

In Amman, Palestinian officials said PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat was prepared for a two-week delay in implementing the accord because of Israeli terms for withdrawing from Jericho.

"Arafat told Fatah Central Committee members and his executive committee that they have to accept a delay of two weeks in implementing the accord," a PLO official said in Amman a few hours before the PLO leader was due to arrive.

The Palestinian officials, who attended the meetings in Tunis but requested anonymity, said Mr. Arafat was hoping during talks in Amman on Monday to persuade U.S. Secretary of State Warren

Christopher to pressure Israel to change its position.

The officials said Israel had refused to change from its original definition of the size of Jericho to fall under Palestinian administration — less than seven per cent of the area sought by the PLO.

The PLO is also seeking control of border posts linking the Jericho area and Jordan. Israel has insisted these must remain manned by its troops.

The main negotiations, on security issues, were taking place at a secret location in the Egyptian capital Cairo.

"We are exerting all efforts to meet the deadline," said a source close to the talks.

"In El Arish all the issues are administrative and we don't see any crisis or a real problem. But the military issues are certainly more delicate. Hopefully, we will finish before the 13th (of December), or a few days later."

"The reality is nothing interesting has been achieved yet. There is some progress but no final agreement has been reached yet on the remaining issues."

"We (the PLO) are going to negotiate on the basis that the withdrawal is on December 13 as agreed. We are sparing no efforts and no time but whether we finish on time or not, this has to do with Rabin," Dr. Shaath told Reuters.

"I am not pessimistic. I am simply resigned to the fact that if we finish (the negotiations) we are ready but if they (Israelis) are not ready we will not finish. It takes two to decide."

"From our part we're doing our best to finish on time but the more I hear Rabin statements saying there might be a delay I start to believe there will be a delay," he added.

In talks last week progress started reported on the release of Palestinian prisoners. Dr. Shaath said Israel presented a plan and a timetable under which it will free up to 10,000

But the source said both sides have still to agree on the date of the last phase of the release.

Christopher tells Syrian leaders of economic benefits of peace

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher tried to convince Syrian leaders of the economic benefits of peace in talks here Sunday to unblock the stalled Syria-Israeli negotiations, U.S. diplomats said.

U.S. officials have also said Mr. Christopher, who arrived here from Israel on the second leg of a Middle East tour, was carrying new proposals to give an impetus to the peace process.

But the secretary of state has so far declined to reveal his plans.

On his arrival he immediately met with Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharras and emerged from the talks one hour later saying discussions had been "successful," according to the official Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA).

Mr. Christopher also called for improved relations between Washington and Damascus before heading for crucial

talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

The outcome of the discussions are not expected to be known before Mr. Christopher's return to Washington on Dec. 11.

But in order to satisfy Syria, which is seeking a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, any offer made by the United States must include diplomatic as well as economic incentives, U.S. diplomats say.

Mr. Christopher will also seek a clear peace commitment from Syria to convince Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that talks with Syria should not be put on the back-burner while Israel concentrates on peace with the Palestinians.

"My role is an intermediary," Mr. Christopher said before leaving Israel.

"This is an unprecedented opportunity to have a comprehensive peace and I will do all I can... to see if we can realise the promise of peace with

security," he told reporters.

The secretary leaves Monday for Amman and returns Thursday to Damascus following consultations in Israel. He will also visit Egypt and Tunisia.

Syria has threatened to boycott the next round of talks if Israel did not express readiness to withdraw from the occupied Golan Heights.

Mr. Christopher told reporters before leaving Israel that he hoped his talks in Damascus "will be an opportunity to energise the discussions between Israel and Syria."

"I don't want to create unreasonable expectations," he also said.

Mr. Sharras was also present at the meeting with Mr. Assad at the presidential palace.

Syrian officials quoted Mr. Christopher as telling Mr. Sharras of Washington's determination to continue its efforts

(Continued on page 5)

2 Palestinians, Israeli killed in violence in occupied lands

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Two Palestinians and an Israeli died Sunday as a wave of unrest continued in the Middle East prompting U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to call for a halt to violence.

A Palestinian opened fire as he tried to storm a bus in the Tel Aviv suburbs killing a male passenger, police said. A bullet hit the man in the head but driver managed to bundle the attacker off the vehicle and drive away.

A soldier aboard the bus opened fire, cutting down the Palestinian, police said, correcting an earlier version that a stray Israeli bullet hit the passenger.

Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack identifying the Palestinian as 20-year-old Khaled Awad Shihateh from the Jabalia refugee camp on the Gaza Strip.

Dozens of angry Israelis crowded around the Palesti-

nian's body at the crossroads shouting "death to Arabs."

Since the signing of the accord on Palestinian self-rule in September most Arab-Israeli violence has been confined to the occupied territories.

The attack coincided with the peace mission to the Middle East by Mr. Christopher and appeared designed to deepen doubts of many Israelis that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) — let alone Israeli security forces — can rein in hardline Palestinians out to wreck peace efforts.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said such attacks would not detract the march towards peace.

"We are determined on one hand to fight with all our means, within the limits of the law, the terrorists and to continue negotiations to implement the declaration of principles (accord)," Mr. Rabin told

reporters in occupied Jerusalem.

"We will not allow these terrible atrocities to interfere with our decision and determination to reach an agreement and to implement the first major step towards peace and the solution of the conflict between the Palestinians and us," Mr. Rabin said.

The killings added to the tension ahead of the Dec. 13 deadline for Israel to begin pulling troops out of Gaza and Jericho.

"There is both anticipation and anxiety in the air," Mr. Christopher said before leaving Israel for Syria on a mission to kickstart the bilateral peace talks.

"But I urge everyone on all sides to avoid violence, to take all steps over this difficult period. I think the leaders have an obligation on each side to enjoin their followers to avoid violence," he said.

Egypt, Israel and Turkey link up to promote tourism

By Alistair Lyon
Reuters

ANKARA — Egypt, Israel and Turkey, eager to repair the damage done to their tourist industries by political violence, have clubbed together to promote travel to the region.

Each country sees the pact signed in London last month as a harbinger of further regional cooperation which could blossom rapidly if the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord is implemented.

"Tourism and peace are intertwined," says Egyptian Tourism Minister Mamdouh Al Beltagi, one of the signatories of the East Mediterranean Tourism Association (EMTA).

"The bringing of peace to the region has given us the opportunity to realise the long-envisioned goal of tourism cooperation in the eastern Mediterranean," Karel Goymen, under-secretary of Turkey's Tourism Ministry, told Reuters.

Turkish Tourism Minister Abdul Kadir Ates said last week he planned to take a bicycle tour in the region to publicise EMTA.

The three countries took two years to negotiate the accord, which they hope will lure hundreds of thousands more visitors in the next few years and allow them to share marketing costs.

They have opted to pool their resources to promote the region rather than competing on a narrow national basis.

"This will make the whole region more attractive," said Israel's ambassador to Ankara, David Granit. "The idea is to expand the cake instead of fighting for bigger slices."

Egypt and Turkey are trying to reassure potential visitors alarmed by the activities of Islamic and Kurdish militants who have deliberately targeted tourists in the past year.

Fundamentalist attacks in which nine foreigners were killed have scared off many tourists to Egypt, where government figures show that tourism is down by about a third this year.

In Turkey, bombings and kidnappings by rebel Kurds

have cut at least \$1 billion from this year's tourism earnings. Officials say tourism brought in \$3 billion in the first 10 months. Revenues for 1993 had been expected to top \$4.5 billion.

Things are better in Israel, still on target for a record two million visitors, but tourism in the occupied territories remains depressed and the three-month-old peace accord has so far failed to halt violence between Israelis and Palestinians.

Egyptian Ambassador Mohammad Al Diwany said that by banding together in times of crisis the three countries could fend off pressure from foreign tour operators to cut prices.

"This agreement can involve millions of people and improve their standard of living," Mr. Diwany told Reuters.

"A just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian problem will let the area enter a new phase. With goodwill and good intentions this can lead to further, openings and cooperation."

The founder members of EMTA say their organisation is open to other countries to join. Libya, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Greece, Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia, both parts of Cyprus and a future Palestinian state would all be eligible, Mr. Goymen said.

Perit Epikman, a leading Turkish tour operator, said regional cooperation was increasingly important in tourism.

"Regions, not countries, will be competing against each other in the near future," he said. By the year 2000, the Middle East's biggest tourist rival would be the Far East, he added.

In the days of the former Ottoman empire, travellers could wander across the Middle East untroubled by national frontiers.

Now EMTA's founders look forward to the dismantling of the barriers and boycotts thrown up by the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"This is the beginning of something very important, the first agreement of its kind," Mr. Granit said. "Tourism is an excellent field to start. It's not political or strategic."



VICTIM OF VIOLENCE: Israeli policemen carry the body of Khaled Awad Shihateh, 20, who was shot dead along with a bus passenger by Israeli soldiers at a Tel Aviv suburb bus station on Sunday (AFP photo)

'New' Palestinian radio joins campaign against autonomy deal

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Opponents of the Middle East peace process have intensified their media campaign by introducing a new Palestinian radio station to the airwaves of the region or by increasing the period of transmission of an existing radio station.

A radio station identifying itself as "Jerusalem Broadcast" has been heard in the air for one hour on most evenings since September, shortly after Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed their landmark autonomy agreement.

According to listeners, the radio, which claims to be based in Jerusalem, broadcast on the same wavelength as Radio Israel's Arabic Service, which reduced its "political propaganda" citing the progress towards peace after the signing of the Israel-PLO accord.

Most of the programmes that the "Jerusalem Broadcast" aired were Palestinian national songs in what the Al Quds Press Service described in a report this week as trials. Al Quds said Saturday the radio station was new and planned to broadcast for five hours daily between 8 p.m. and 1 a.m.

The programmes will be mostly aimed at the countries neighbouring Israel, particularly targeting Palestinians who lost their homes with the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, according to Al Quds.

PLO officials asserted the radio was not new and was an extension of the "Voice of Jerusalem" operated by Ahmad Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC).

"Voice of Jerusalem" has been in the air for the past four years and is believed to be based somewhere in Damascus.

"Jerusalem Broadcast is no different from Voice of Jerusalem and it is transmitted from Damascus," said a PLO official in Amman. "All that the radio did was to extend the transmission hours and mislead listeners by claiming that it is broadcasting out of Jerusalem."

"Obviously Jibril would like to have everyone believe that opponents of the peace process are so strong that they could operate a clandestine radio station from the heart of Jerusalem," added the official.

But several listeners disagreed. They said the new broadcast was distinctly different from the familiar style of "Voice of Palestine" — a

source for many who like to listen the rhetoric and tall claims of "military operations against the enemy" that most of the time go unconfirmed.

"The style is different, the presentation is sharper and the contents are more to the point," according to a book shop owner who said he was frequent listener of "Voice of Jerusalem."

Observers said it was unlikely that the new radio, if indeed it is new, was based in Jerusalem since the Israelis, armed with sophisticated communication interception and detection equipment, would have bust it less than 24 hours after it went on the air for the first time vowing opposition to the autonomy accord.

In the meantime, pro-autonomy accord Palestinians are setting up their own radio and television station. The PLO has signed an agreement with a French television company to set up a Palestinian TV station in Jericho.

Radwan Abu Ayyash, head of the Palestinian Journalists Association, is leading the radio and television project, reports said. Mr. Abu Ayyash has assigned future staff of the station for training in Europe as well as Jordan, according to the reports.

Peres: Deal was easier without settlements

TEL AVIV (AP) — The presence of Jewish settlements in the occupied lands is complicating the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiations, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Saturday. But dismantling the settlements was not an option because it would be too divisive for the Israelis, Mr. Peres told Israel TV's second channel.

Under the Israel-PLO accord, Israeli troops are to start withdrawing from the occupied Gaza Strip and the West Bank region of Jericho on Dec. 13, with the pullout completed by April 13.

But the Jewish settlements in those areas will remain under Israeli control and the army is to guard them, according to the Israel-PLO agreement of principles.

Disagreement over security arrangements is one of the key stumbling blocks in the current Israel-PLO talks on implementing the autonomy accord.

"We were aware that we had two choices — either to dismantle the settlements and then we would have had very few security problems... or to have the settlements remain, and then we knew the security issue would be very complicated," Mr. Peres said Saturday.

"We had to choose between tearing the Israeli people apart and creating a complicated, difficult and unprecedented solution," he added.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has never said what he thought should happen to the 144 Jewish settlements when Israel and the PLO negotiate the final status of the occupied lands, starting in 1996.

But Mr. Peres and other Israeli leaders have hinted that settlers would be given a choice of moving back to Israel or living under Palestinian sovereignty.

Sentencing hearing begins today in Iraq loan scandal

ATLANTA (AP) — A banker who admits he helped illegally channel U.S. aid to Iraq hopes to convince a judge that he was little more than a fall guy. A sentencing hearing begins Monday for Christopher Drogoul, who pleaded guilty to three charges for his part in arranging \$5.5 billion in illegal loans to Iraq.

Mr. Drogoul, 44, insists he was only a middleman in a programme approved by the U.S. government and his Italian superiors at the state-owned Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL).

"BNL-Atlanta was... a tool of the U.S. and Italian governments," Mr. Drogoul said last month in sworn testimony before the House of Representatives Banking Committee. "One has to consider it a foreign policy matter and not a banking matter."

Mr. Drogoul told the committee he helped carry out an ambitious scheme by the United States, Italy, Britain and Germany to secretly arm Iraq against Iran in their 1980-88 war.

Prosecutors initially claimed Mr. Drogoul masterminded the scheme to provide unauthorised loans to Iraq through BNL's Atlanta operation.

He was charged in a 347-count bank fraud indictment, later dropped to 70 charges after a judge rejected an earlier plea bargain and criticised the Justice Department for its handling of the case.

In exchange for Mr. Drogoul's latest guilty pleas, the remaining 67 charges were dropped. The government is seeking a prison term of up to 6½ years, arguing that Mr. Drogoul was a key figure in the scheme.

Mr. Drogoul's attorneys want U.S. District Judge G. Ernest Tidwell to limit the sentence to the 20 months he already has served, saying Mr.

Drogoul should not be punished further for what they call merely carrying out approved bank dealings.

"Only Christopher Drogoul is kept from his wife and his children, detained as a result of events for which no sense can be made," said his lawyer, Robert M. Simels. "If fairness and parity still have meaning, the only viable sentence... is to let him go on with his life."

But the foreign policy argument may be of no use at sentencing. Judge Tidwell had barred the use of foreign policy evidence in the trial and rejected Mr. Simels' attempts to subpoena former President George Bush.

Judge Tidwell said he will focus on the three charges Mr. Drogoul pleaded guilty to in September — one wire fraud count and two counts of making false statements to federal regulators.

The judge seemed unmoved at a hearing last week when Mr. Simels told of a 1989 letter from a General Motors Corp. executive to a BNL officer in Rome, stating that bank executives had never given him any reason to question Mr. Drogoul's authority to do business in Iraq.

The letter, Mr. Simels said, shows Mr. Drogoul reported to Rome. "I doubt that's going to help you much," Judge Tidwell said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Howard Heiss said the alleged involvement of Mr. Drogoul's bosses in Rome is irrelevant to the crimes he pleaded guilty to.

The government's original contention was that Mr. Drogoul acted alone to secretly funnel money to Iraq through a U.S. programme designed to promote agriculture. Some of the money allegedly financed Iraq's military before the Gulf war.

Egypt has promised to honour human rights, U.S. official reports

CAIRO (AP) — A U.S. official said Saturday he received assurances from the Egyptian government that it will not condone torture inside prisons or other violations of human rights.

But John Shattuck, the State Department's top policymaker on human rights, endorsed a technically illegal Egyptian human rights watchdog agency that accuses the government of torturing prisoners and many other abuses.

And Mr. Shattuck, ending an official four-day visit, seemed to walk a tightrope between the line of a caravan of officials he met, including President Hosni Mubarak on Saturday, and that of Egyptian human rights advocates.

Mr. Shattuck told a briefing at the U.S. embassy he was pleased with evidence of the Egyptian judiciary's commitment to human rights. He added, however, that he raised in his meetings with Egyptian officials the problem of military courts trying civilian dissenters, which critics complain does not guarantee fair trials.

Mr. Mubarak's largely secular government has been involved in open confrontation with extremist groups seeking to overthrow the governing system by force in favour of one based on a stricter interpretation of Islam. More than

240 people have been killed in the past two years.

Attempting to crush the extremists through speedy trials, Mr. Mubarak is referring to courts-martial cases involving attacks against government targets or the system itself.

The trials have drawn serious fire from local and international human rights groups, which allege they disregard many elements necessary to fair trials.

Rights advocates also charge that torture is routine inside Egyptian prisons to force confessions. The government also is accused of making hostages of suspects' relatives in efforts to force surrenders and inflicting on-the-spot punishment by killing suspects or detaining them for long periods without charge or trial.

The U.S. State Department has made many of the allegations itself. Cairo rejects all such charges.

Mr. Shattuck, assistant U.S. secretary of state for human rights, avoided a direct answer to reporters' questions on linking to Cairo's commitment to human rights the \$2.1 billion in annual U.S. aid to Egypt.

He insisted that human rights was of prime importance to President Bill Clinton's administration and spoke of his pleasure at Egypt's willingness to continue dialogue over the

issue.

Mr. Shattuck also said he received assurances that the government was moving toward recognising Egypt's main local rights group, the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights. The government has given no such public indications. Officials often justify failure to answer the organisation's complaints with the argument that it does not exist under Egyptian rules banning private organisations lacking government approval.

The United States is "struck by the courage of the EOHHR," Mr. Shattuck said. "We support such organisations and share their values."

Mr. Mubarak's government also has promised to investigate all allegations of torture through a special office related to the public prosecutor, Mr. Shattuck said.

No Egyptian security personnel have been convicted for torturing or otherwise violating the rights of political prisoners like religious extremists. There have been convictions of people in authority for abusing common criminals.

On another subject, Mr. Shattuck denied that he met with extremists in Egypt. He said he was in Cairo only to meet officials and non-governmental organisations working to advance human rights.

Sudan meeting hits self-rule deal, backs Muslim causes

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Islamic leaders have rejected the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord on limited self-rule in Gaza and Jericho but called on rival Palestinian factions to avoid internal clashes.

The call came in a resolution read out to delegates late Saturday at the end of a three-day meeting of 400 Islamic figures in the Sudanese capital. The conference also called for unity of Muslim ranks.

But some Palestinian hardliners, backed by the Muslim fundamentalist Hizbollah and other groups in Lebanon, criticised the resolution because they wanted a "clear condemnation" of the Sept. 13 autonomy accord.

"We want a stronger resolution, we want to denounce those who signed the accord, and call on our people to wreck the deal," said the head of the Islamic Jihad in Palestine, Fathi Shakaki.

Sudanese fundamentalist leader Hassan Tourabi told journalists after the final session that the resolution was final and could not be modified.

ified. "We do not want an extremist stand," he explained.

The resolution was not made public.

But Nayef Hawatmeh, head of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), said the resolution included in its final version a call for wrecking the accord.

"What is important is not the choice of words but the content," said Khaled Abu Al Omrein, a member of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

The conference also pledged to support the intifada until the creation of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

It urged Muslim governments not to normalise ties with Israel "before the Palestinians recover all their legitimate rights."

Apart from backing the Palestinians, the Islamic conference also pledged support for the Muslims of Bosnia, Somalia, Iraq, Sudan, Indian-administered Kashmir and Azerbaijan.

It called on the United Nations to lift its sanctions on Iraq

and Libya, and also to exclude the Muslims of Bosnia from the arms embargo.

The conference called for the world's Muslims to boycott U.S. and British products for one week, but it gave no date

for the measure. Bosnian officials had also urged a boycott of French goods.

Calling on Somalis to avoid bloodshed and close ranks, Islamic leaders pledged to contribute to "Arab and African

efforts to secure a peaceful settlement."

A committee was formed, chaired by Dr. Tourabi, to seek support from Muslim countries for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.



A Palestinian boy peers out from banners calling for armed struggle against Israel during a demonstration held Saturday in the Jabalya refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip (AFP photo)

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Les Aventuriers de L'Espace
18:30	Omnibuses
19:30	Migra
19:45	News in French
19:55	The weekly sport magazine
20:00	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Delta
21:10	The House of Elites
22:00	News in English
22:30	The Gully
23:10	The Sleeping Beauty
PRAYER TIMES	
04:54	Fajr
06:16	(Sunrise) Duha
11:36	Migra
14:13	Asr
16:36	Maghrib
17:58	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedieh, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 612785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624500	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637441	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Teravanta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 641195	
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675991	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Moderate weather conditions will prevail with clouds appearing at different altitudes, and winds will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min, Max, temp.	
Amman	5 19
Aqaba	12 25
Devers	3 20
Jordan Valley	11 24
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman	
18, Aqaba 22 Humidity readings: Amman 31 p.c. cent, Aqaba 47 p.c. cent.	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Isam Al Asmar	884504
Dr. Farouq Nour	786680
Dr. Bahjat Badr	849362
Dr. Jihad Zayadeh	881148
Firas pharmacy	961012
Ferdous pharmacy	776336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Nasrallah pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636720
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmichani pharmacy	637601
Nasrullah pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Hilo	279773
Alquds pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Fawaz Hamdallah	90244
EMERGENCIES	
Fixed Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Emergency	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Highway Police	834302
Traffic Police	836302
Public Security Department	63621
Hotel Complaints	615800
Police Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	897467
Complaints	787111
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Alquds Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Rudin Jordan	774111
Water Authority	660100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813 32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	644281 6
Alquds Maternity, J. Amn.	642411 2
Alquds Maternity, J. Amn.	642392
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmichani	664171 4
Shmichani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	628645
Al-Musharraf Hospital	667227 9
The Islamic, Abdul	660127 37
Al-Ahli, Abdul	661164 6
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	771013 5
Army, Marja	891011 15
Queen Alia Hospital	662240 50
Amal Hospital	674135
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	09983323
Zarqa National Hospital	09980850
Ibn Nafis Hospital	09986732
Al-Basma Modern Hospital	09989891
IBBID:	
Princess-Basma Hospital	10275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	10272275
Ibn Nafis Hospital	10232710

Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
09:35	Cairo (MS)
10:00	Khartoum (SD)
12:05	Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
18:45	Dubai (EF)
01:10	Amsterdam (KL)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:00	Beirut (RJ)
11:00	Amsterdam, Beirut (RJ)
12:05	London (RJ)
12:15	Frankfurt (RJ)
12:45	Cairo (RJ)
20:00	Dhahran (RJ)
20:15	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:30	Dubai, Karachi (RJ)
20:45	Damascus (RJ)
21:30	Abu Dhabi Muscat (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
06:00	Istanbul (TA)
08:15	Beirut (ME)
10:25	Cairo (MS)
11:00	Khartoum (SD)
13:30	Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (GF)
19:45	Dubai (EF)
02:05	Amsterdam (KL)
HUJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	8:00 every Monday
Arr. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Monday
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in Jds. per kg.	

In first day of vote of confidence session: Deputies call for tax, educational reforms, urge government to address constituencies' needs



Abdul Karim Kabariti

(Ma'an District) (Progressive Democratic Coalition-PDC) I congratulate you (Speaker Taher Masi) for the vote of confidence you obtained from the deputies... and I congratulate the respected deputies for winning the people's confidence under free and fair elections.

We don't want to forget the (old and new) government that returned from its transitional vacation to the democratic arena and deserved, with confidence, the generous increase in (ministers) salaries.

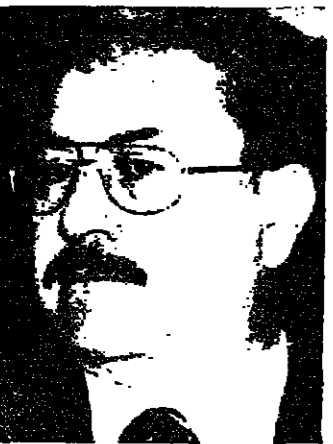
There are three institutions that should not be harmed: Al Ajlun, the symbol of legitimacy; the judicial, the symbol of justice; and the army and security forces, the symbol of national honour.

My opposition or support (to the government) has nothing to do with my allegiance to the regime but is based on a difference in opinion... From that point the prime minister wants us to go along with him, and from these angles we want him to come along with us... The alliance (PDC) extended its hand to the prime minister, but he did not reach out for the extended hand.

His refusal to link... might lead to the government's monopoly on decision-making... This means, by necessity, that democracy is in danger... This government has abolished the portfolio of parliamentary affairs because of lack of confidence in the rules of the democratic game and (is a sign) of non-commitment to democracy, policy and in style.

We live an economic crisis that has been deepened by mixed declarations from the government since Sept. 13 agreement. Poverty is everywhere... It necessitates the unification of all efforts without forgetting that the government should be in full control of the Zakat committees...

Peace is an objective and negotiations are the means... We back the government in the peace talks to maintain the role of Jordan as a player in the game after attempts to make it a court for foul play.



Ali Abdul Ragheb

(Amman Third District), (PDC) Although I am very close to the moderate stream... I find myself obliged to take an anti-government stand.

We hope that the government will present its policy statement in the future in detail, a statement that would reflect the people's aspirations. But, since the government has chosen the Speech from the Throne as its policy statement, I demand the government, in its response to the deputies' speeches, to clarify its policies by presenting a programme that would be an answer to all the questions raised by the deputies.

I demand a revision of the economic development plan that was drawn up recently... The government is invited to wipe the dust off the investment law and modernise it... There should be an increase of the salaries and wages earned by the private and public sectors workers.

Subsequent governments have tried to improve the administrative performance and combat bureaucracy, but the results so far are very limited.

The present stage requires a

distinguished relationship between the legislative and the executive authorities... This stage necessitates a distinguished ministerial team capable of confronting the challenges... and up to the expectations of the people's aspirations and hopes.



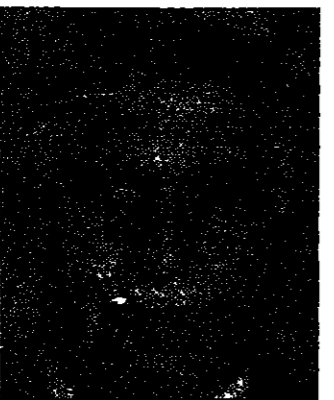
Samir Kassar

(Balqa District) (PDC) In the face of fast-moving developments and challenges that loom in the horizon I call on the government to do all in its power to enhance national unity which is made up of social, cultural and political fabric. Safeguarding national unity is not a political luxury but rather a legitimate expression of the will of the present generation.

Regarding the peace process, I believe that our brothers in the PLO have the right to choose the method by which they feel they will guarantee the Palestinian people's rights and the return of holy Jerusalem. I believe that Jerusalem should remain the capital of all those affiliated to the three monotheistic religions.

I believe that the government should give due attention to the development of public administration through a continued process of training and through recruiting of the best applicants. An efficient civil servant is an administrative leader who can transform his department into one characterised with creative production.

We should remember that modern development is based on skilled and productive manpower and that solutions to economic or social problems can only come through efficient administrations. Development of public administration does not materialise through changing the persons but rather in applying legislations and regulations aimed at upgrading performance.



Farah Rahadi

(Ajlun District) (NAF) "My decision on whether to withhold a vote of confidence or cast a vote in favour of the government's policies depends on the prime minister's statement in reply to the deputies' queries and demands."

It should be emphasised here that we are not pro or against the government, but that we act within the framework of the Constitution. We believe that opposition is a fundamental element of parliamentary life and without an opposition there would be no point in having a parliament. We believe that the House ought to serve as a watchdog over the government's behaviour and ensure justice.

Concerning education, I believe that this sector falls far below the aspired standard for the following reasons: failure to appoint the right person in the right position largely because certain groups hold the upper hand in shaping the destiny of education; the existence of very rigid school curricula and failure to introduce meaningful changes that affect the substance rather than the outward form; failure on the part of the successive governments to heed the call for the creation of a teachers union that would cater to the needs of teachers like other professions and trades; the lack of buildings suitable for schools.

I demand that the government deal very effectively with the agricultural sector by introducing regulations linking pro-

duction to local needs and so ensure self-sufficiency. The government is called on to introduce measures to protect farmers against natural disasters. I demand that the Ajlun District be upgraded to governorate status as it abounds with natural resources and is inhabited by more than 100,000 people



Tawfiq Kreishan

(Ma'an District) (Independent)

"Concerning the political aspect of the government's policy I demand that the government give some details about practical steps to be taken and call on the government to spread awareness among the public about the political changes resulting from the so-called new world order which is bound to have its serious impact on future generations. I am for a just and honourable peace ensuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland, but I am against normalisation of relations with Israel before these legitimate rights have been established."

I demand that the Arab countries end their sanctions imposed on Iraq and Libya and demand that the Arab League Charter be amended in a manner to help the nation deal with new challenges and end the divisions among Arab states.

In the information policy, I believe that the situation requires the enactment of new legislation that would win public confidence and improve programmes presented by the radio and television, especially children's programmes in accordance with a national plan. I believe that the press plays a major role in the nation's destiny and should therefore enjoy continued moral and material support.

Regarding the economic aspect of the government policy, I stress here that most crimes and the social tragedies emanate from poverty. We all ought to join hands and deal with this problem by tackling the unemployment issue and expanding the social security umbrella and jurisdiction."



Mohammad Daoudieh

(Tafilah District) (PDC) "Am I going to give the vote of confidence in the name of the people to those whom I don't know?"

Ever since this parliament was elected, (everybody) started to describe the House as a submissive one that will definitely give vote of confidence to the government.

The prime minister has directly contributed to tarnishing the image of the House, especially when he did not consult parliamentary blocs who extended their hand to him. He did not even give any sign of cooperation...

Deputies did not have any say in the government reshuffle as if the House is dissolved... what has happened is ignoring the parliament in an unprecedented and unjustified manner... That was anti-democratic and a refusal to recognise that people are mature and have to be consulted.

The government is the voice of only one political party and can be described as an Ahd government, in reference to the Ahd Party and a wafd government in reference to the Jordanian delegation (wafd) in the peace talks...

Are we going to protect a government that does not take people's representatives into consideration? When democracy is in danger then Jordan is in danger.



Ali Shatti

(Balqa District) (Independent)

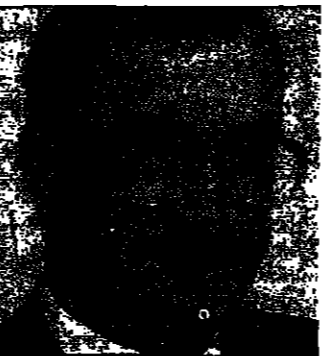
"My decision to give or withhold confidence depends on the government's reply to the remarks, queries and demands contained in my statement."

I call on the government to establish a national fund to support farmers in times of natural disasters, to tighten control on prices of agricultural inputs and to find external markets for agricultural products. I urge the government to reallocate the plots of land already distributed by the Jordan Valley Authority to the well-to-do people to poor farmers who plough and plant the land.

I also urge the government to improve the services provided for underprivileged areas.

I call on the government to reassess the management of the financial and banking sector, and set up a national committee to monitor the performance of this sector. I urge the government to continue to subsidise basic food items. I also call on the government to redress vocational training to satisfy the demands of the labour market.

I call on the government to inform the House on where Jordan stands vis-a-vis the peace talks. We are peace-seekers, peace is one of the tenets of our Islamic faith; so we have to seek the kind of peace that will ensure the restoration of the rights of people to their legitimate owners and end the state of war."



Munir Sobar

(Amman Fifth District) (PDC) "I will decide on whether to vote in confidence of the government or not in the light of the government's statement to the House in which I hope to hear details about its plans to handle social, agricultural and industrial issues and its reply to my demands in this statement."

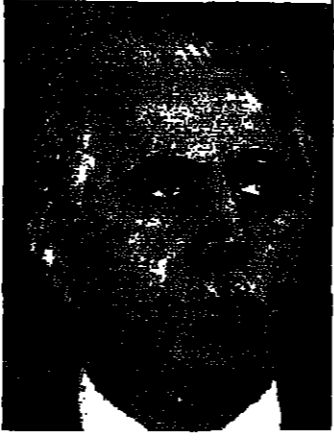
I demand that Amman citizens should have the right to elect their municipal council and I believe that the appointment of council members by the government is in flagrant violation of the rules of democracy.

In 1986 the government dissolved the municipal council and decided to create what came to be known as the Greater Amman Municipality, grouping the local councils of Amman and their neighbouring towns.

It was also announced that the measure would be in effect for only four years, but it was extended first until 1990 and then until 1994, without any justification. I demand that the citizens of Amman elect their representatives to their municipal council, that the government terminates the merger of the 14 municipal councils of the towns surrounding Amman with the capital's municipality and that the government abstain from appointing mayors and municipal council members.

The residents of Amman feel that the measures taken so far concerning the Greater Municipality was a concentration of centralised authority and does not cater to the requirements of the modern age and development.

I demand that the government pave the way for people to have equal opportunities in acquiring higher education at Jordanian universities, and that similar equality should be applicable to the appointment of people to posts in public administration."



Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat

(Irbid district) (Independent Bloc) I will consider which way to vote later.

Granting a vote of confidence or not is not related to the person of the prime minister or any of the cabinet members. It rather requires a responsible judgement over the government policy and performance... We had hoped that this government would be a neutral one, in composition and in performance. But the fact is a high number of this government members belong to one party and its practices and some of its members were in the service of this party.

We thought that the primary duty of this government was the supervision of the elections... (however), the government started a series of measures that created confusion, chaos and fear... From the start, the government was supposed to call the Lower House for an extraordinary session to consider the election law. What it did instead was resort to dissolving the House without a convincing justification and in a surprising manner that indicates lack of respect to the legitimacy of this parliament...

Unfortunately, this government failed to be neutral or capable of having a public debate on the election law.

This government came for a specific mission, that is to supervise the elections... Usually and in such cases, this kind of a government would resign (after the elections) ... but the prime minister immediately started to insist that his government is permanent... that he did not accept (anyone) to consider it as temporary.



Mifteh Al Lawzi

(Amman Fifth District) (NAF) "I support a vote of confidence in the government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and urge it to implement the directives contained in His Majesty King Hussein's letter of designation."

I express my appreciation of the government's pursuit of democracy and its endeavours to apply decentralisation and reform public administration. Concerning the Palestine question, I support the Kingdom's adherence to its principled and national stands as best expressed by the King, especially with regard to the holy places in the occupied lands.

I support every effort to re-establish strong ties with Arab countries and re-build solidarity among Arab states and urge the government to speed up such efforts.

I demand that the government re-examine the country's taxation regulations and urge it to refrain from imposing further taxes as the Jordanians are now unable to carry further burdens.

I demand that the present government deal effectively and immediately with the question of state-owned lands which have been illegally seized by citizens. The solution

(Continued on page 5)

Visiting European trade officials look to expand existing relations

AMMAN (J.T.) — The president of the Belgium-Luxembourg Arab Chamber of Industry and Trade, Willy Monfils Sunday held talks with Jordanian officials on promoting trade and said he hoped that the Kingdom would participate in an international fair in Belgium next year.

In discussions with Marwan Awad, Ministry of Industry and Trade secretary general, Mr. Monfils said that participation in the fair would help in introducing Jordanian products to the Belgian markets and boost Jordan as a tourist attraction in the Middle East.

Mr. Awad said he hoped the current talks would expand relations between Jordan and Belgium which started in 1976 when an agreement was signed to strengthen cooperation in economic, technical, trade, industrial and agricultural fields.

His Majesty King Hussein's 1983 visit to Belgium served to boost trade and economic ties because the two sides then underlined their determination to launch joint ventures, said Mr. Awad.

As a result of the King's visit, Belgium extended JD 10 million in technical assistance to Jordan to help it carry out

water and railway schemes, added Mr. Awad.

He said the joint Jordanian-Belgium Committee convened in Amman last May and signed minutes which called for the establishment of a European information centre for the development of Jordanian exports to European countries and facilitating the transfer of modern technology to Jordanian industries.

Mr. Awad urged Belgium to import more Jordanian vegetables, fruits and phosphate to help adjust the balance of trade which is heavily in favour of Belgium.

According to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Belgium sells Jordan powdered milk, animal feed, raw tobacco, medicines, lubricating oil, paper, mirrors, bulldozers, machinery equipment, tractors and aircraft spare parts.

Of the 2.5 million tonnes of phosphate Belgium imports annually, only a fraction is imported from Jordan; the rest comes from Morocco and the U.S. because the cost of shipping Jordanian phosphate to Belgium is relatively higher, said the ministry.

Mr. Monfils and the accompanying delegation met Satur-

day with members of the Amman Chamber of Trade and said that the Jordanian Law on Encouraging Investments provides a good climate for investment in numerous industrial, agricultural and technological fields.

He said Belgium welcomes the establishment of trade centres in Amman and Brussels and holding trade fairs.

The Belgian delegation is due to conclude its visit to Jordan Wednesday.

Mr. Monfils earlier Sunday met Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan to discuss Jordanian-Belgian relations.

Both sides underlined the need for Jordan and Belgium to promote cooperation in tourism and to encourage Jordanian tourists to visit Belgium, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Petra quoted Mr. Monfils as saying that the current visit to Jordan reflects Belgium's hopes to expand and boost cooperation with the Kingdom.

Mr. Hassan suggested the creation of joint Jordanian-Belgium Chamber of Commerce to help increase the volume of trade.

King receives U.S. inter-faith delegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday reviewed the general situation in the Middle East with a visiting delegation of a U.S. inter-religious group. The King emphasised Jordan's demands for the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people and the Kingdom's support for and commitment to the peace process to ensure these rights. He said that Jerusalem stand as a symbol of peace and a meeting place for all

believers in God, the followers of the three monotheistic faiths. Jordan, he stressed, will not accept any sovereignty over the holy places of the city except that of God. The delegation is currently on a tour of the Middle East to listen to various views concerning the peace process and discuss means of giving momentum to the achievement of a just and durable settlement.

American opera stars share stage with Jordan's NMC orchestra

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Tonight American opera stars Arturo Romani and Ella Lee will fill the halls of the Royal Cultural Centre theatre with arias, cantatas and duets by Mozart, Bononcini, Cavalli and Beethoven.

The one-night performance will be presented by the National Music Conservatory, NMC, under the direction of Kifah Fakhouri.

The audience will also be treated to American Negro spirituals by Mrs. Lee, and interpretations of "Bel Canto" songs like "Chi Si Pasce" by Cavalli and "Per La Gloria" by Bononcini will be performed by Mr. Romani. Soprano Ella Lee, who was born in Texas and raised in California, was a leading soprano with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony and the New York Philharmonic.

She performed under the baton of Sir Georg Solti and Leonard Bernstein.

Her love of quality songs extends to Negro spirituals and modern, popular music. Talking to the Jordan Times, Mrs. Lee revealed interesting details about a singer's training and the intensive efforts, continuous dedication and professional preparation that are required to "make a voice." However talented or gifted one can be, said Mrs. Lee, it is only through serious study and hours of practice that an opera singer can achieve excellence.

Tenor Arturo Romani is of Italian origin and comes from a family for whom music, and more particularly opera is a firmly established tradition.

His great-grandfather, Felice Romani was the librettist of famous operas by Donizetti (L'Elisir d'Amore) and Bellini (La Norma) and also worked with the young Giuseppe Verdi.

Mr. Romani's own career spans concerts as soloist from the U.S. to Europe, in operas like The Barber of Seville, Don Giovanni and La Traviata.

He has also sung in musical comedies (My Fair Lady) and oratorios (The Messiah).

One of his voice teachers was a friend of the legendary Enrico Caruso, Mr. Romani told the Jordan Times.

Kifah Fakhouri, director of the National Music Conservatory (NMC), is a composer and a conductor who studied at the American University of Beirut (AUB) with Allen Hovey. He conducted the AUB Symphonic Band in 1982.

Under his dynamic and charismatic direction, the NMC orchestra, in less than eight years, has grown from non-existent to a 40-piece ensemble that steadily pursues musical refinement.

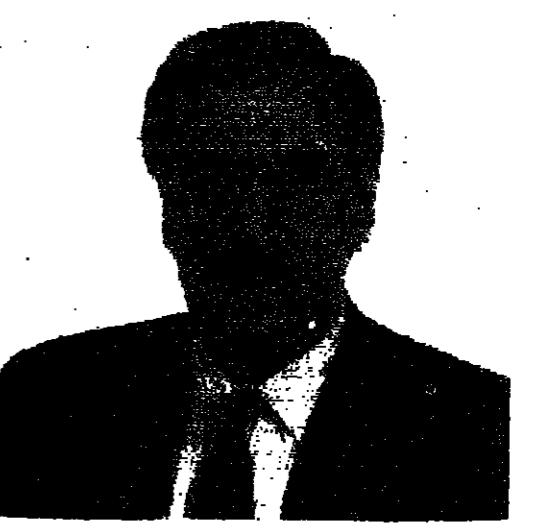
With members from Jordan, neighbouring Arab countries, the U.S., Japan and England, the NMC is living proof of the universality of the language of music.

Mr. Fakhouri also writes Arabic music and is the author of study books that are used in school music curricula in Jordan and Lebanon.

Mr. Romani and Mrs. Lee expressed their pleasure at rehearsing with the NMC orchestra, working with Mr. Fakhouri and being in Jordan, a country they intend to discover and know better, he said.



Ella Lee



Kifah Fakhouri



Arturo Romani

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of prints and drawings by Fakhr El Nissa Zeid at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jubal Laweideh. Also showing the permanent exhibition (Saturday-Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.)
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by a number of Iraqi artists at La Casa Art Gallery (between the 5th and 6th Circles).
- ★ Exhibition of sewing equipment at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Lebanese products at Philadelphia Hotel.
- ★ Second Jordanian exhibition of cotton and woolen products at the World Exhibition Hall — University Road (11:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.)

- ★ Exhibition of paintings by artist Khalid Khreis at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of watercolours by artist Shaher Jirmi at the Goethe Institute.
- ★ Photographic exhibition on the intifada at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.)
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Farhadi Abdel Hafeez at the Balka Art Gallery in Al Fuhais (10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 729021).
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by several Jordanian and Iraqi artists at the Orfali Art Gallery in Um Uthaina.

FILMS

- ★ Film entitled "Indochine" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1974
مجلس الصحافة العربية - المجلس العربي للصحافة

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Facsimile: 696183
The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Expensive delays

THE JORDANIAN-Israeli memorandum of understanding on reopening of Jordanian commercial banks in the West Bank signed last week in Washington is a necessary step for the ultimate Jordanian-Palestinian economic cooperation even though it was essentially a by-product of the Jordanian-American-Israeli working group on economic, trade and banking cooperation. When autonomy takes effect as expected in the months ahead, the incorporation of Palestinian consent and agreement on the seemingly transient joint Jordanian-Israeli supervision of banks in the West Bank will have to be attained. This would be necessary in order to complete the circle of cooperation and transcend Israeli technical control over financial institutions in the occupied territories by a joint Palestinian-Jordanian one.

In practical terms, this step should come as a relief to the Palestinians whose short and long-term economic and financial future lies squarely with the Arab World. No wonder the PLO is leaning heavily in support of the Jordanian currency as the official currency of the infant Palestinian entity. Palestinian economists and finance experts have concluded that given the nature of the existing Palestinian economy and the insufficiency of hard currencies, it would be counterproductive to introduce a Palestinian currency to service the economy of the embryonic Palestinian self-rule. Under these circumstances, the control and supervision of banking and finance institutions in the occupied territories by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) appears to be a must for as long as one can see. The principal beneficiaries from this understanding will be the Palestinian people whose economy is in shambles after decades of Israeli occupation.

Unfortunately till this date, though, the Jordanian-Palestinian draft agreement on economic cooperation remains just a proposal that has yet to be endorsed officially by the PLO. The implications of this delay in ratifying this Jordanian-Palestinian accord can be best understood and appreciated against the backdrop of the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO agreement which envisages close economic cooperation between them. The visit of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to Amman may touch on this point over and above the traditional issues on how to develop and respect a joint strategy on peace talks with the Israeli government. The past few weeks have illustrated more than ever how the interests of Jordan and the PLO are interwoven and inseparable, especially within the framework of these peace negotiations. The PLO chairman's talks here may at last succeed in putting the final touches on a thorough and genuine Palestinian-Jordanian coordination and cooperation agreement that, when ratified by both sides, will pave the road for a fruitful relationship and a strengthened negotiating position for both sides.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Sunday discussed the start of a parliamentary debate on the government's policy which will end with a vote of confidence. Whether the deputies refrain from backing the government's policy, or supporting its programmes, it is clear that such a debate will be an exercise of democracy and political pluralism, said the paper. Noting that the Jordanian citizens will be anxiously following the debate, the paper said that the voters who sent the deputies to Parliament would be watching their representatives' performance not only during this debate but throughout the four years of their mandate. Referring to the experiment of the former House, the paper said it was successful by all standards and it is hoped that the present deputies would benefit from the previous experiments and devote their discussions to the issues of particular concern to the public. What the Jordanian public looks forward to seeing, added the paper, is a debate that aims at achieving further accomplishments for the country and hope to see their representatives showing awareness of the various issues of concern to the public at the political, social and economic levels. The paper said that the Jordan people also look forward to watching the prime minister and the Cabinet members giving clear replies to queries to be raised by the deputies so that the image of democracy remains impeccable and the spirit of cooperation between the executive and legislative authorities can be enhanced.

AL DUSTOUR daily commented on a recent visit to Yemen by Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, noting that the visit was part of Jordan's mediation efforts to end the current dispute between the country's leaders. The visit reflects King Hussein's deep concern over the internal situation in Yemen and his keenness to safeguard Yemen's national unity, said the daily. Jordan is anxious to see the Yemeni leaders patching up their differences and protecting their unity and the course of democracy the country has chosen, added the paper.

Best implementation of the Israel-PLO deal: Widest participation, establishment of popular sovereignty

By Anis F. Kassim

Author's note: While the Palestinians were "enjoying" the clear legal status of being "occupied" and thus entitled to the protection accorded them in the international human rights instruments, they have been drawn into a tunnel of uncertainties by the Declaration of Principles. The legal status of their occupied territory is now vague; they are not independent nor has independence been promised, but at the same time they have to develop, with the state of Israel, the entire region and the most crucial issues left without clear guidelines on how to solve them. The new challenges facing the Palestinians require that they neither fight the declaration nor succumb to its dictates. They are duty-bound to chart their way out of that tunnel. For this purpose, the Palestinians need to reinvent a new social process that is founded on democratic principles based on the widest participation of Palestinians and respect for human rights. A democratic system that guarantees Palestinians' human rights and satisfies their material, moral and psychological needs is a system based on "popular sovereignty". This concept is well-rooted and sufficiently articulated in many human rights conventions and declarations. By utilising this system, the Palestinians may be able to accomplish not only the right of self-determination, but also the right of self-development.

On Sept. 13, 1993, the Declaration of Principles between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the government of Israel was signed at the White House under the auspices of the United States and Russia. The PLO chairman, Yasser Arafat, and Israel's prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, two most hostile and antagonistic enemies, shook hands. A new era has reportedly begun in one of the most enduringly troubled areas on earth.

As expected, the Declaration of Principles attracted applause and support on the one hand, and uproar and condemnation on the other. This was equally true in both the Palestinian and Israeli camps. Both Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat were labelled "traitors" by one group and "courageous" by the other.

This paper is not intended to indulge in praising or lamenting the declaration. It will deal with it on the premise that such a declaration is equivalent, in some legal sense, to an "act of God". It is an inevitable accident. Yet, certain preliminary remarks are due, especially those pertaining to the substance of this paper.

I. The Declaration of Principles — an overview

Chairman Yasser Arafat had repeatedly said that he "saw a light at the end of the tunnel". This was expected of a leader who at times of depression in his movement had tried to muster popular support. The Declaration of Principles has reversed Mr. Arafat's motto. It is not a mere pessimistic attitude for a Palestinian to say that "I see a tunnel at the end of the light". It is a reality set by the declaration.

1. The declaration is not an "agreement"; it is rather an "agreement to agree". At least the parties to the declaration have to negotiate and agree to thirteen major agreements in addition to countless subsidiary agreements, letters of understanding, side aides memoirs and other minutes meetings, the parties, for example will, *inter alia*, agree on:

- the mode and conditions of the elections,
- the formation of a Palestinian police force,
- the transfer of additional powers and responsibilities,
- the interim agreement,
- the scope of authority, structure and procedures for the electricity, water, sea port, authorities, etc.,
- the formation of the Continuing Committee that will be authorised to determine the modalities of admission of persons displaced in 1967,
- the establishment of dispute settlement machinery including conciliation and arbitration,
- how the Palestinian Jerusalemites will vote,
- the mode of international supervision and observation,
- how the election campaigns will be conducted,
- almost endless agreements on "cooperation and coordination," and more crucially,
- the powers, authorities and structure of the elected council.

2. The Declaration of Principles refers to half withdrawal and/or redeployment of Israeli forces in the occupied territories. The entire world community, except for Israel, affirms and reaffirms that the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip are legally "occupied territories". Even Israel's High Court of Justice unwittingly admits that legal status but is hesitant to apply the Fourth Geneva Convention to these territories. Now, under the declaration, what is the legal status of these territories? Would the Palestinian still aspire at the protection provided for in international humanitarian law?

3. The Palestinians view themselves as part and parcel of the Arab Nation. They share the same value system and expectations, past, present and future. The declaration has, in effect converted the Palestinians into being an integral part of the Zionist project. This point may be exemplified by reading Article XI of the declaration in conjunction with Annexes III and IV. An Israeli-Palestinian Economic Cooperation Committee will be established in order to develop and implement three spheres and, above all, a plan for the "region". What are the shared values between the Palestinians and the Israelis that exclude those values shared with the other Arab countries? This joint venture between Israel and the Palestinians is not an agreement between equals. One of them is a sovereign state and the other is of a dubious status. The Palestinians are neither independent nor quasi-independent.

4. The final status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is still in balance. This issue was a nightmare to the Palestinians and the declaration came to firmly establish that torment. There was no doubt that the legal status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was that they were occupied territory and therefore the sovereignty was residual in the people of that territory. This is a well-established rule in customary international law. The declaration is dubiously silent on this very essential point. There is a strong suspicion that the U.S. government, the mentor of this peace process, may have shifted its position on this issue from its long-standing view, as explained by former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, that "sovereignty ultimately resided in the people of the West Bank and Gaza" to what Secretary George Shultz was subsequently arguing during his tenure that sovereignty "could be shared". Even though the declaration is silent on both concepts, it is in effect driving the Palestinians towards the Shultz concept. How else can one interpret the section on "cooperation and coordination" other than as saying that the parties will ultimately reach a phase of a joint sovereignty by function? Cooperation and coordination covers virtually all aspects of the social process of any community.

5. The six major areas that are left for the second phase of negotiations constitute a deeper tunnel than the tunnel excavated by the declaration. The legislative history of the Camp David Accords rings an alarming bell in the ears of the Palestinians. The Palestinians, before the advent of the declaration, were fully aware that the world at large, supported and aided by numerous instruments of public law, confirmed that Jerusalem was an "occupied territory", that the refugees' rights to return home or compensation have been repeatedly affirmed by about forty U.N. resolutions, that Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are illegal and an obstruction to peace, that borders are those of the June 1967 and that security arrangements are the other side of the coin of Israel's occupation and annexation. Under the declaration, all these clear issues are confined in the darkness of the tunnel, together with the other major issues highlighted above.

II. The Palestinians' new strategy — popular sovereignty

For the Palestinians to navigate their way out of this very dark tunnel of the declaration they must reinvent their strategy. They are left with no options except to devise methods that may help them convert the adverse effects that have befallen them as a result of the declaration into benefits. They are duty-bound to make the new changes their ally instead of becoming the

victims. At the very minimum, the Palestinians should exert their best efforts to mitigate the risks that they might run.

The new strategy should be based on the concept of "popular sovereignty". Popular sovereignty should not be viewed as only limited to an elected council; it should also include a wider participation of Palestinians inside and outside Palestine. It should also be well-rooted in the values of human rights and the supremacy of law.

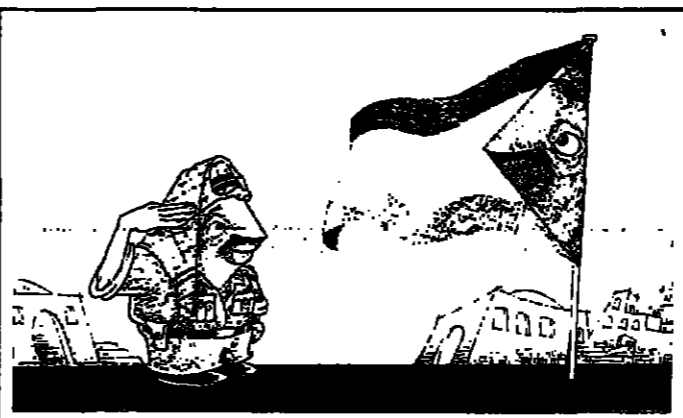
The prescription of "popular sovereignty" is not an academic exercise in the form of self-governing authority. It is rather a prescription that has its *raison d'être* in legal, social, economic and political factors. It is an essential prerequisite to build up an authority that may graduate to a "statehood".

Palestinians, whether those who live under occupation or in exile, suburban or refugee camp dwellers, elite or men of the street share, to a large extent, the same expectations. They must be eager, and strongly so, to participate in the reconstruction of their homeland. A new system of government must be devised to enable the widest participation of those Palestinians in the shaping and sharing of their community life.

The enthusiasm of the world community to help the Palestinians build or develop their infrastructure and increase the absorptive capacity of their economy needs to be capitalised on. The Washington conference, held last October, was attended by forty seven states and governmental organisations, and almost all of them have committed themselves to provide the newly emerging Palestinian community with aid, in cash and in kind, and to help rebuild the necessities of

The U.N. General Assembly has been aggressively involved in promoting the issue of human rights. The assembly's resolutions are characterised as one of the most important sources of public law. The most notable of these resolutions is the Declaration on Social Progress and Development. This declaration is a universal manifesto of the right of peoples to self-development. It proclaims that all peoples shall have the right to live in dignity and freedom and to enjoy the fruits of social progress and to contribute to that progress; to participate actively in all elements of society, in defining their goals of development, in determining their own priorities, in adopting measures to ensure their effective participation and increase that participation in the preparation and execution of national plans and programmes of economic and social development, in establishing their legal and administrative measures for the protection and improvement of their political and civil rights and ultimately to create a conducive human environment.

In summation, it is incumbent upon the Palestinians leadership to shift its old policies and strategies to firmly establish the "popular sovereignty" of its constituency in order to avoid falling a victim to the changes that have befallen the Palestinians. The leadership has to realise that a new authority based on law and on human rights is not a luxury; it is rather a necessity. It is not an issue that it can shelve for a later phase, rather it is an emergency. It is not an option that it can elect to do without; it is mandatory by customary international law that is binding on all participants.



III. Modalities

How to achieve this popular sovereignty?

No doubt that election is one form of maximising this objective. Yet it is not exclusive. In the Palestinian context, there must be a variety of modalities to ensure the widest possible participation of Palestinians in shaping and sharing the new value system.

A- Elections

The Declaration of Principles provides for elections in the occupied territory so that the Palestinian people "may govern themselves according to democratic principles". It provides that such elections should be "direct, free and general" and be held under agreed supervision and international observation, and the "Palestinian police will ensure public order". Annex I, dealing with the mode and conditions of elections, stipulates that the two parties will agree on how the Jerusalemites will participate in the election process, agree on the system of elections, agree on the mode of agreed supervision and international observation and agree on the rules and regulations regarding campaigning.

It is to be noted that there is no obligation on Israel, for example, to repeal the Military Orders that prohibit or restrict free assembly, association, campaigning. Neither does Israel undertake to release about twelve thousand political prisoners to participate in the elections. Israel is not obliged under the declaration to release all information on the population registration records. Above all, there is absolutely no reference to human rights standards in conducting elections.

The various human rights instruments cited above do call for free, genuine and periodic elections. Admittedly, these terms vary from one situation to another and they could be interpreted differently. In the Palestinian context, to safeguard free, genuine and periodic elections, an independent international supervision is a prerequisite. The Palestinian community should be enabled to send to the elected council real representatives who can genuinely express their expectations. These expectations could be thwarted

by the Israeli occupation authorities, who can exercise intimidation either directly or indirectly through their settlers. These expectations could also be frustrated by proponents of the one-party system of government, who can justify this form of government on the basis that at this crucial stage of nation-building "we cannot afford the luxury of democracy". The totalitarian approach is likely to be supported or encouraged by the Israeli authorities. It would be much easier for them to deal with a dictator than with a genuine democratic system of government. The PLO leadership may also be inclined to frustrate the election process. It has not so far demonstrated an intention to shift gears from the revolutionary mentality to democratic approach of governance. To the contrary, in the most recent meeting of the Central Council there was a strong drive to do away with elections.

Electoral laws in the Gaza Strip do not in effect exist. Such laws that remain are those that the Egyptians put into effect for elections to the Socialist Union, which was the sole ruling party in Egypt under the latter part of President Nasser's reign.

The electoral laws in the West Bank are the residual Jordanian laws and regulations that were enacted in 1960. Even though such laws guarantee free, genuine and periodic elections, they need to be amended to conform with international human rights standards. For example, women should be granted the right to vote and be elected; the infitda generation should be allowed to participate, by lowering the age of those who are eligible to vote; and representative seats for specifically Christians and Muslims should be eliminated. This system, once upgraded could be extended to apply to the Gaza Strip without interference by the Israeli authorities.

B- Popular participation

Due to the circumstances involving the Palestinian community inside and outside their homeland, there is a great desire to participate in reconstructing their home. Professionals in various specialisations should initiate, and the Palestinian leadership should enable them to initiate, a form of association that will have a role in the decision-making processes. The input of skilled associations is an essential ingredient in the decision-making process. Such participation will render decisions to be authoritative and sanctioned by qualified, competent expertise.

How would the community view the construction projects envisaged in the Palestinian plan for development if not well identified by qualified planners and engineers, priced by competent quantity surveyors, supervised by experienced management consultants, financed by seasoned bankers and drafted by specialised lawyers? What are the community expectations of a health plan if not prepared by physicians and public health experts? The same applies to the judiciary and the legal profession, to accountants and economists, to education, to taxes, to children care, human rights etc. All professions should organise their respective members and the leadership should allow them to participate at the widest level possible, in influencing decision-making and implementation.

Each professional group should be invited to a broad-based conference to be held under the auspices of the PLO. The conference should be able to freely elect its advisory board, executive committee, sub-committees and secretariat. The conference will adopt its own basic documents and regulations. The PLO leadership will provide the political linkage between that professional association and the centres of decision-making. No decision shall be adopted in any area of activity without the prior input of the professional association concerned that has an interest in that area.

C- Control and accountability

It is elementary to state that no system of management can accomplish its desired objectives without being subject to an adequate machinery of control and accountability. All decisions, whether they are at the stage of formulation or at the level of implementation, should conform with community expectations. This necessarily requires informed public opinion which, in turn, requires a system of information gathering and dissemination.

A free press is one component of the desired apparatus. Independent radio and television is another. An ombudsman is perhaps more urgently needed during the new era. The experience of other countries with the concept of an ombudsman has proved to be very effective. The ombudsman is a genuine expression of popular sovereignty. He must be guaranteed independence, freedom of investigation and reporting, equipped with the necessary powers and authorities, and accountable only to the elected council.

If development plans were to commence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as envisaged in the Washington conference, one may reasonably expect that certain safeguards have to be established well in advance to protect these plans against corruption, inefficiency, deprivation, dislocation or uneven distribution of resources.

D- Independent judiciary

No democratic system can be so labelled in the absence of an independent efficient judiciary. The Israeli occupation government has ruined the existing system almost completely. It has to be not only reconstructed but also unified. Gaza has inherited virtually all mandatory legislation that was in force in Palestine during the British Mandate, while the West Bank inherited a mixture of Palestinian laws and Jordanian laws. Even the judiciaries in each part have a different set up and must be realigned. There are not enough courts, or what remains thereof, to handle disputes and a significant work load. There are eight magistrate's courts, three courts of first instance and one court of appeals in the West Bank. The Court of Cassation and the High Court of Justice were abolished by the Israeli military government. In the Gaza area there are four magistrate's courts, one district court and a high court.

The jurisdiction of these courts has been continuously marginalised by the occupying power, hence the judiciary has lost expertise in litigation and interpreting the relevant laws. The abolition of the Court of Cassation has deprived the judiciary from a significant source of jurisprudence.

The PLO leadership bears, along with the Palestinian lawyers, special responsibility in this regard. The unification of the laws, the judiciary system and the rehabilitation of the judges and lawyers are immediate challenges that have to be reckoned with. A high judicial council should be urgently established, to be manned by well-established judges and senior attorneys who have practised under both Jordanian/Egyptian and Israeli regimes. The council should have its own autonomy to be able to perform its tasks and to set the stage for developing into becoming the judicial branch of the government of the state-in-the-making.

IV- Recommendations

The Palestinians have a long experience in facing challenges, the most recent of which was the Zionist conquest of their homeland. The new declaration has brought forward a very serious challenge. Palestinians are better off not fighting it or succumbing to its dictates. It is an irreversible event supported by the major powers. The Palestinians' best option is not to fall victim to this challenge, but rather to build up their institutions, which will enable them to make the best of it.

One prescription for a safe exit from this tunnel is to guarantee the widest possible participation of Palestinians and to establish popular sovereignty. This concept is firmly established in international human rights documents. By utilising this system, the Palestinians may be able not only to accomplish their claim to self-determination but also to accomplish their claim to self-development. In the prevailing circumstances in the occupied Palestinian territory, it would not be sufficient or satisfying to reach the stage of self-determination if it were, not firmly based on developed institutions that would enable Palestinians to share in the production of community value and to share in their equitable distribution.

The writer is a legal expert working at the Washington-based Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine and, for some time, advisor to the Palestinian peace delegation. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Where does children's criminal responsibility start?

By Waleed Sadi

LIKE ALL other peoples, Jordanians were shocked and alarmed when British and international press reported a few months ago that James Bulger, a two-year-old toddler, was brutally murdered by two ten-year-old boys whose identity was kept secret until they were convicted and sentenced to indefinite detention two weeks ago by a court in Preston, England. At the time of sentencing, the two boys, Robert Thomson and Job Venables, were only eleven. The details about how they lured the toddler away from his mother in a Liverpool shopping mall and then bludgeoned him to death with bricks and a heavy metal bar and left him on a railway line where he was severed into two naturally arose the anger and disbelief of not only the British people but also the rest of mankind.

From a Jordanian and human rights perspective, the finding of criminal responsibility and sentencing the two children to detention was also disturbing. Jordanian laws on criminal responsibility of children less than thirteen years old are so

progressive that they are the envy of more advanced nations of the world. The Jordanian Law on Juveniles effectively exempts children till the age of twelve from criminal responsibility by virtue of the fact that they cannot be sentenced to even short periods of imprisonment, much less to a more serious punishment. This is true no matter how serious is the offence with which they may be charged.

Human Rights File

For us Jordanians, therefore, finding children at the tender age of ten hold criminally responsible and convictable is puzzling, to say the least. Not that the brutal murder of toddler James Bulger is not shocking and disturbing. Far from it. The very young child has a right to life that not even innocent children may deprive him of.

The disclosure that one of the two boys, Job Venables, might have seen a violent video rented by his father prior to the commission of his terrible crime, adds a new dimension to the case and should turn the finger of accusation away from the children, first to their parents, for exposing their children

to films of violence and crime and second to the society and governments for allowing the production and screening of such wicked visual presentation of crime and violence. Against this backdrop, it is the British society and the British government that are the true and ultimate culprits for interpreting freedom of thought and publication so liberally and irresponsibly as to facilitate the execution of crimes even by children.

No one can convince me that Thomson and Venables are criminally responsible for their deeds when their environment exposed them so early in their formative years to crime. It is the British government and the British mores and new tendencies that should have been "prosecuted" for the acts of the two boys. The family of the murdered toddler would be well advised to take the authorities to court for the crime that was perpetrated by the two children and hold them accountable.

From the human rights perspective, as conceived by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two basic, legally binding instruments that emanated from it, there appears to be, on the surface, benign silence on how to treat children at the age of ten when they commit a crime. The declaration itself speaks of extending protection to children.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) also speaks of protecting children and stipulates that capital punishment cannot be applied on persons less than 18 years old. The International Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates the same thing. On the surface, there appears to be little said about criminal responsibility as far as children are concerned. Yet, a more liberal construction of these internationally codified principles would call for an effective protection of children. And when one speaks of protection, one has got to be thinking in terms of protecting children from violence and crime as a group of human beings who are most vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. This is where human rights and the more enlightened attitude towards children meet and coincide.

As a human rights activist on the international arena, I would readily conclude that children as young as ten cannot be held criminally accountable. Rather, I would conclude that the protection that children are entitled to under the relevant human rights treaties and conventions should include protection from crime and violence, especially of the kind Job Venables was subjected to by his own father.

Vote of confidence session

(Continued from page 3)

is to end this awkward situation by charging the squatters a reasonable price for the land they seized and end the problem.

I demand that the government re-examine the Election Law with a view to introducing an amendment allowing large districts like the Amman Fifth District to be split into two or more districts and to assign one seat in parliament for each sub-district.

Badr Riati
(Musan District) (Islamic Action Front - IAF)

His Majesty King Hussein has wanted free and democratic elections, but the government's practices before and during the election process shed doubts on the integrity of the elections.

This creates fears about the fate and future of the democratic process in our country. Anti-democratic practices by the government include dissolving parliament before the end of its mandate and the introduction of the one-person, one-vote law after the absence of the legislative power, the 11th parliament. This law had a clear impact on the national unity, since it enhanced sectarianism and tribalism against which Prophet Mohammad had warned.

Regarding the government's neutrality and integrity in elections, people in my district believe integrity and honesty were lacking.

The government practices include the transfer of certain employees at a time when senior officials were putting pressure on certain leaders to support certain candidates rather than others under the pretext that the ones they were lobbying for will serve the interest of the country. They also include the arrest of some candidates and their supporters, while providing all the necessary facilities for other people and denying others these facilities.

Therefore, I call for reconsidering all administrative and legal procedures governing registration, polling and vote-counting and propose that the whole election process be entrusted to the judiciary which is a neutral body. I take this opportunity to thank the Jordanian armed forces and the military intelligence department for taking a neutral stand in the election process in my district.

The settlement march, incorrectly called the peace march, is not but a subjugation to the greed of the aggressors, and a recognition on our part of the legitimacy of its aggression and occupation of our holiest shrines after Mecca and Medina. This is a prelude to controlling our economy, wealth, water and natural resources, thus achieving its old new dream of establishing Greater Israel, from the Eup-

hrates to the Nile. Peace in Islam does not mean the surrender and abandonment of the land.

Holding the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) responsible for the settlement does not relieve us from the responsibility.

I urge the government to reconsider its information policy in line with our faith, culture, traditions and norms. Observers of the government's information policy will find that it tends for normalisation of relations with the enemy by ignoring the activities of the intifada or the pews of the intifadees, still in Marj Al Zuhour in South Lebanon.

Fawwaz Zou'bi
(Ramtha District) (NAF)

"In light of the government's response, I will decide on whether to give or deny the government a vote of confidence."

We find that the Speech from the Throne, which the government considered as its policy statement, constitutes a real and serious start for a responsible political attitude, but we advise the government, in these difficult and crucial circumstances, to talk less and act more.

Protecting the environment and providing security and health are national duties guaranteed by the Constitution.

We call on the government to put an end to the moody policy. We also demand the government restore the lands confiscated in 1967 by the Jordan Valley Authority to build Khaled Ben Walid Dam as well as the lands that the Armed Forces seized in Umm Qais or to compensate their owners."

Abdul Majid Al Azzam
(Irbid District) (NAF)

I hope that the government will adhere to the Speech from the Throne to the 12th Parliament, upon which the government sought a vote of confidence from the Lower House. We all agree that His Majesty King Hussein enjoys the wisdom, astuteness and a unique status among world leaders, that all made him the focus of attention that in turn won Jordan a special place worldwide.

I call on the government to take the necessary steps to alleviate poverty and unemployment, which are responsible for the continuous suffering of big segments of the society. To achieve this I suggest that the Zakat fund and its committees be activated and that the role of the Development and Employment Fund be activated.

I also call on the government to fairly distribute the various development projects throughout Jordan, taking into consideration population density.

I urge the government to cover all sectors of society with social security.

I hope the government will

provide offices for deputies, each in his governorate to facilitate their work.

Abdul Hadi Majali
(Karak District) (NAF)

"Now that we have won the confidence of our people and have taken our seats in Parliament, we as deputies should justify their confidence in us and put into practice the meanings of democracy and fight off all forms of corruption and injustice."

The government policy statement encompasses various issues of concern to the Jordanian people and one which reflects the King's concern over safeguarding national unity and ensuring further progress and development.

As deputies we ought to interact with the various issues, taking lessons from past experiences and considering the challenges of the coming stage so that we can avoid negative aspects in our democratic march.

We believe that in a democracy there must be an opposition in parliament, one that can diagnose any shortcomings and failures, in the application of laws, pinpoint weaknesses and help solve problems.

I urge the government to give special attention to the less developed and less fortunate districts and help them to develop and catch up with the other areas.

I suggest that the government allocate a portion of the profits of the major industrial projects in Jordan to help improve the living conditions of the less developed regions by initiating income-generating projects and urging local societies and institutions to stimulate their activities and carry out social and economic projects.

Concerning public administration development, I suggest that the government formulate job descriptions for employees, a practice that is bound to reduce the number of surplus employees. Unless this is done, there can be no way of reforming the public administration system in Jordan.

We support the policy statement in which the government pledges to apply the decentralisation policy, reduce external debts and work to achieve a just and comprehensive peace and also to continue supporting the Palestinian people and respecting their independent decisions.

We demand that the government promote extracurricular activity in the educational system so that it can encourage talented students towards creative work. The government ought to encourage art, sports, sculpture and other forms of extracurricular programme."

Nawwaf Qadi
(Northern Bedouins) (JNF)

"This government is from the people and to the people... and it wasn't exported. Its members possess the experience and the knowledge."

We have sons and daughters in our district who have obtained university degrees but who are unemployed, while many of their brothers who come from other governorates take jobs at the Ministry of Education and other government institutions... we hope that the government would look seriously into the conditions of these people.

We demand the government give priority of employment at Al al-Bait University to the Mafrag governorate, especially in the administrative posts as it is the case at Mu'ta and Yarmouk universities.

I wish the government would adopt a plan for the state-owned lands in the Jordanian desert and dig wells there. I hope they will give these lands to our sons without exception.

Mohammad Odeh Njadat
(Southern Bedouins) (JNF)

"My position on the confidence vote depends on the government reaction to the demands of my front:

1) Consulting the parties and

the parliamentary blocs from time to time on various political development.

2) Consulting the parties and the parliamentary blocs when conducting a government reshuffle (and not as the case was in the last government) to deepen democratic principles and political pluralism.

3) Achieving justice in appointments depending on geographical distribution, qualification and normal promotion and not on sectarian, personal or party affiliations.

4) Formulating a modern election law that meets the current stage, achieves constitutional justice and avoids the negative aspects in the current law.

I would like to point to the following areas which need special attention:

1) Poverty and unemployment.

2) The 93-97 development plan, which needs to concentrate more on rural and badia regions which cover 80 per cent of the Kingdom's area.

3) Strengthening the Armed Forces and giving retired army personnel more benefits especially by backing the Jordan Economic and Social Organisation for Retired Servicemen.

I ask the government to continue to support and improve bedouin settlement projects and to give more attention to the Wadi Araba region where the inhabitants live in difficult conditions.

Also, there is still a major deficiency in the education sector as the badia regions lack qualified specialists because of the absence of incentives that would encourage educationists to come to the region."

Hamman Sa'eed
(Amman Fifth District) (IAF)

"I withhold the vote of confidence and urge my colleagues to do so."

The government should not have hidden itself behind the King's Speech from the Throne. It should have presented its own policy statement.

This government, as is known, has been formed for two objectives: to conduct the elections and to continue talks with the Jewish enemy. Those two objectives make it transitional.

According to tradition, a government that oversees elections or dissolves parliament resigns. It is parliament that gives governments legitimacy not the other way around.

Negotiations with the Jewish enemy is a result of the Gulf war, which was only one step on the road to settlement.

A part of Palestine (the West Bank) was part of Jordan and that part, according to the Constitution, cannot be abandoned. The two banks (of the Jordan River) have become one with one people and the people bear the historical, religious and political responsibility for any part of the Kingdom that falls under occupation.

This government, by signing an agenda (with Israel) on

to achieve progress on all tracks of the peace process, which also involves Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians.

Both sides expressed their commitment to achieving a just and comprehensive peace, a Foreign Ministry official said.

Syria is demanding a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Israel wants full recognition from Syria.

Its foreign minister, Shimon Peres, who met Mr. Christopher Sunday, said the night before that Israel would not withdraw from all of the Golan Heights but might return part of the strategic plateau.

Syria's official daily Al Baath said in an editorial on Sunday: "What we in Syria want is full and total Israeli withdrawal from our occupied territories as a basic precondition for achieving real peace in the region."

"Anyone who thinks Syria could accept anything else is

Sept. 14, has given up sovereignty over the West Bank when it agreed to consider the boundary between the two banks a border with the so-called Israel."

The government was neither fair nor neutral in conducting the elections, from beginning to end. Thousands of voter names were duplicated.

Nader Abu Shaar
(Irbid District) (NAF)

"The government has started applying decentralisation for the sake of saving time and effort for citizens and saving them the trouble of approaching the central government in Amman. But I say that such practice should go hand in hand with a drastic administrative reform encompassing various government departments to be coupled with a serious effort to stimulate the role of the Inspection and Control Bureau and to grant the Audit Bureau expanded powers."

I believe that unemployment is one of the worst social issues facing the Jordanian community over the past few years and it is now estimated to be running at the rate of 20 per cent of the total workforce.

I demand that the government undertake all possible measures to deal with this issue and to find appropriate solutions in cooperation with the private sector.

One suggestion to the government in this respect is to reduce the rate of non-Jordanian workers employed in the country and enact legislation to encourage investment.

I believe that the government should re-examine the taxation system with a view to reducing the burdens on the citizens and raising the per capita income which currently does not exceed an average of \$1,000 per annum.

I also demand that the government refrain from lifting the subsidies on basic food commodities because that would affect the majority of the public in Jordan.

I demand that the government conduct a study aimed at raising the salaries of all employees and military personnel as well as pensioners, enabling them to cope with annual inflation and the constant increase in the cost of living."

Mohammad Thuwail
(Amman Second District) (Jordanian National Front) (JNF)

"It is of paramount importance that brothers view local and international changes logically... and that the Arab performance be upgraded to the level of supporting Jordanian overcoming its economic crises which have their impact on our social security and stability."

Also, the Kingdom should be divided into new electoral constituencies according to clear bases that are relevant to the number of inhabitants and their representatives in Parliament."

Christopher holds talks in Syria

(Continued from page 1)

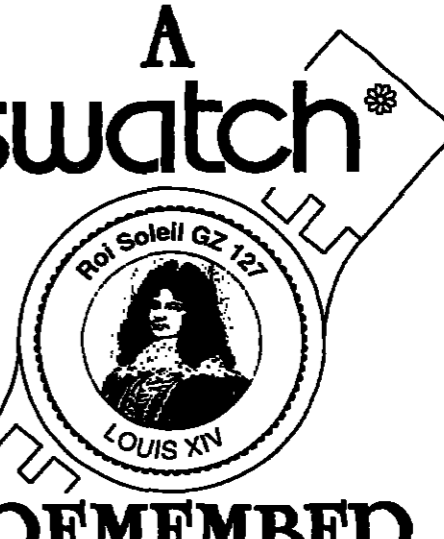
wrong," it said. Eleven rounds of talks between Syria and Israel in the last two years have made no tangible progress.

Officials said Mr. Christopher also expressed the "desire of the United States to improve Syrian-U.S. ties," a possible reference to a meeting between Mr. Assad and President Bill Clinton which American officials say is being considered.

The United States has repeatedly called for a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East which would ensure security in the region and pave the way for economic benefits.

Washington is also seeking a clear signal from Damascus that peace with Israel will not be an empty promise.

President Clinton, in defending his economic and trade policies across the world, has insisted that economic prosperity was the best guarantee for peace.



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King, Arafat hold talks

(Continued from page 1)

But he is said to be concerned that an agreement with Jordan could be used by the Israelis to limit Palestinian prospects for a future total sovereignty.

"The PLO should not be worried about that," said one Jordanian official. "The principles in the joint Jordanian-Palestinian agreement leaves the door open for different scenarios for the future bilateral relationship and it does not bloc Palestinian sovereignty."

Mr. Arafat has come under considerable pressure from his colleagues and the Palestinian business community to reactivate close coordination with Jordan.

He was specifically criticised for drawing closer to Egypt and giving priority to his agreement with Israel at the expense of Jordan.

Some of Arafat's aides refuse this criticism saying that

Mr. Arafat has to ensure Israel's unequivocal recognition of the Palestinians as sovereign entity before binding himself with any agreement that could be exploited by Israel to evade Palestinian independence.

According to the draft economic agreement, the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) will regulate the monetary policies while the Jordanian dinar will be the official currency.

The agreement also involves raising the trade exchange to a minimum of \$300 million in the first year — after the inauguration of Palestinian self-rule — and setting up a joint free zone in the Jordan Valley area.

In a memorandum submitted to Mr. Arafat, a number of leading Palestinian investors urged the PLO Chairman to take practical steps to consolidate economic cooperation with Arab countries, particularly Jordan, to prevent continued Israeli control of the Palestinian economy.

OPEC chief: God knows when oil prices will improve

revenues at a production rate of 1.8 million barrels per day and prices of \$14 a barrel.

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- Famous bowler
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Yesterday's Jumbles: GUARD MIDGE POCKET PENMAN
Answer: What the tennis player did after a bad call — MADE A BACKET

DOWN	34 Easy name	46 Said	57 Nibble
1 Use a straw	38 Hersey's	48 Imitation	58 In a lazy way
2 Three — match	37 Actress Linda	49 Acting award	60 Goodbye Lat.
3 Chinchilla, e g	38 Pairs	50 — retreat (Hear)	61 Recent: prof.
4 Actor Alan	40 Leprechaun	51 Ms Riong	62 Rather ..
5 Joseph's pride	land	52 Type of drum	63 Muesli

Arab Bank tops private Arab banks in volume of assets

World's Arab banks increase net profit by 50 per cent

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Arab banking sector had an overall balance sheet total of about \$526.5 billion at the end of 1992, 18.5 per cent above the figure posted in 1991, a study by the Union of Arab Banks shows.

The study, a summary of which was made available to the Jordan Times Saturday, also shows that all the Arab banks had collectively increased net profit by 50 per cent, having recorded a total of nearly \$6 billion at the end of 1992.

Cash in hand and at banks increased by 46.4 per cent between 1991 and 1992 and, as a result, Arab banks consolidated their liquidity to an average of 31.8 per cent in 1992, compared to 30.8 per cent in 1991, the study pointed out.

According to the study, the Arab banking sector repatriated more than \$5.3 billion of external assets which were channelled overseas during the Gulf crisis and, consequently, brought up the total of assets to about \$80 billion at the end of last year.

Credits extended to various economic activities exceeded \$240 billion, reflecting a high 73.5 credits to deposits ratio in 1992 and showing a growth rate of 1.2 per cent over the amounts of credit extended in 1991.

The base of deposits expanded by an average 22.5 per

Main indicators and financial ratios for the Arab banking sector for 1991 and 1992 (Amounts in \$b)

Indicators and ratios	1991	1992
1. Assets	444.3	556.5
2. Loans and advances	237.2	240.0
3. Deposits	266.4	326.3
4. Shareholders equity	77.7	84.0
5. Net profit	4.0	6.0
6. Liquidity ratio (%)	30.8	31.8
7. Credits/deposits ratio (%)	89.0	73.5
8. Adequacy ratio (Bale) (%)	22.2	20.4
9. Profitability ratio (assets)	0.9	1.1
10. Profitability ratio (equity) (%)	5.1	7.1

cent, reaching approximately \$326.3 billion in 1992, the study said.

It added that the shareholders' equity of the Arab banks rose by 8.1 per cent, reaching about \$84 billion, in line with new international standards for capital adequacy.

Furthermore, merg between Arab banks have contributed, to a certain extent, to strengthening the financial standing of these banks and to achieving a 20.4 per cent capital adequacy ratio in 1992, higher than the internationally required level.

In general, the study said, Arab banks enjoy high profitability, exceeding 1.1 per cent when measured to assets and 7.1 per cent when measured to shareholders' equity. In 1991, the percentages were 0.9 and 5.1 respectively.

The remarkable progress of

hundred Arab banks (public and private), noting that they registered a 17.9 per cent growth in assets and a 16.7 per cent growth in profits last year.

As such, the top hundred Arab banks had a total of \$455 billion in assets in 1992, while profits amounted to \$4.2 b.

Other indicators which pointed to the strong financial standing of the top banks were the following ratios: Liquidity: 51.5 per cent; credit extension: 64.5 per cent; capital adequacy: 11.1 per cent and profitability (top shareholders' equity): 12.5 per cent.

Of the top hundred, 37 were public sector banks which covered 60.4 per cent of the assets, 62.5 per cent of the deposits, 61.4 per cent of the credits and 54.6 per cent of the equity.

Performance-wise, the 63 private banks registered better rates of financial adequacy and profitability (to equity), 11.6 per cent and 14.2 per cent respectively, compared to the public sector banks which posted a 10.7 per cent financial adequacy ratio and an 11.2 per cent profitability ratio.

Both categories of banks, which formed the top hundred Arab banks, constituted 86.5 per cent of the overall financial portfolio of the Arab banking market.

According to the union of Arab Banks, the following were the top ten Arab private banks in terms of volume of assets:

- 1) Arab Bank Group (Jordan)
- 2) Al Riyadh Bank (Saudi Arabia)
- 3) Saudi American Bank (Saudi Arabia)
- 4) National Bank of Kuwait (Kuwait)
- 5) National Arab Bank (Saudi Arabia)
- 6) Al Rajhi Banking for Investment (Saudi Arabia)
- 7) Dubai National Bank (United Arab Emirates)
- 8) Abu Dhabi National Bank (United Arab Emirates)
- 9) Gulf International Bank (Bahrain)
- 10) Al Saudi Al Fransi Bank (Saudi Arabia)

The study compared between the performance of the top 50 Arab banks and the top 50 international banks and noted that the first group registered a 12.7 per cent growth in assets while the growth in assets for the second group was only 6.9 per cent.



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Financial Markets

Jordan Times
in co-operation with
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Foreign Exchange Market Summary (November 29 - December 3, 1993)

AMMAN — The dollar appreciated slightly against the mark at the end of last week in comparison to the previous week. Meanwhile, it depreciated against sterling and stabilised against the yen. A series of positive economic reports released during the week failed to spark a significant dollar rally.

The dollar depreciated substantially against the mark and sterling Monday despite the release of positive October existing home sales figures in the U.S. The dollar appreciated to reach 1.7181 marks, after the release of the figures which revealed a rise of 3.6 per cent from September. Furthermore, expectations, that the Bundesbank might ease its monetary policy on Thursday added to the initial dollar rally. However, the dollar's failure to break resistance at 1.72 marks, caused a wave of profit-taking, which resulted in the dollar closing at its lowest level of the week against the mark at 1.7085 marks. On the other hand, the Japanese yen depreciated against the dollar due to another decline in the Tokyo stock market. The dollar closed at 109.23 yen, its highest level of the week.

On Tuesday, the dollar appreciated against the mark in the shadow of newly released positive American economic reports. Consumer Confidence Index showed an increase to 71.2 per cent in November from 60.5 per cent in October.

Furthermore, the Chicago Purchasing Manager's Index rose to 65.3 per cent in November from 57 per cent in October. Meanwhile, sterling appreciated against the mark after the British government's budget for upcoming fiscal year was announced. The pound's rise was attributed to the budget's spending cuts, which proved larger than expected, whereas tax increases were below expectations.

On Wednesday, the U.S. unit continued its appreciation against the mark and sterling to reach its highest closing levels. This appreciation was attributed to yet another batch of U.S. economic statistics. The Purchasing Manager's Index increased to 55.7 per cent in November, from 53.5 per cent in October.

Construction spending showed an increase of 2.5 per cent in November, after rising by 0.8 per cent in October. U.S. GDP for the third quarter was revised to show a rise of 2.7 per cent from 2.8 per cent previously announced. However, this revision didn't have a major impact on the dollar in view of the other positive economic reports.

Meanwhile, the U.S. trade data for the third quarter showed a rise in the trade deficit to \$36.3 billion. On the other hand, the yen appreciated against the dollar in response to a rise in Tokyo stock prices. The dollar, thus, ended at 1.7238 marks and 108.80 yen, while sterling ended at 1.4780 dollars.

The dollar retreated against the mark and sterling Thursday due to position adjustments, despite positive expectations about the U.S. employment report which was due to be released the next day.

The dollar continued its depreciation against the mark Friday despite the release of encouraging U.S. employment data for November. The dollar was reported to have appreciated against the mark following the release of this report to reach 1.7290 mark. The dollar's retreat later in the day was attributed to the fact the employment data was largely within expectations, which caused many dealers to liquidate their long dollar positions. The employment report revealed an increase of 208,000 in non-farm payrolls in November, against expectations of a 170,000 increase. On the other hand, October's figures were revised negatively to show a rise of 147,000, instead of the 177,000 increase previously declared. In the meantime, another set of report was released that day. It included U.S. leading indicator figures, which revealed a rise of 0.5 per cent in October. Factory orders which rose by 1.2 per cent, in October and housing completions, which jumped by 6.2 per cent over the same month.

Currency	26/11/1993		3/12/1993	
	1-Month (%)	1-Year (%)	1-Month (%)	1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	2.98	5.62	3.31	3.75
Sterling Pound	5.25	5.19	5.19	5.06
Deutsche Mark	6.25	5.31	6.18	5.18
Swiss Franc	4.43	3.75	4.50	3.62
French Franc	6.69	5.75	6.63	5.56
Japanese Yen	2.57	2.00	2.18	1.75

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 5/12/1993

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7014	0.7030
Sterling Pound	1.0437	1.0489
Deutsche Mark	0.4072	0.4092
Swiss Franc	0.4692	0.4721
French Franc	0.1163	0.1190
Japanese Yen	0.6451	0.6483
Dutch Guilder	0.3652	0.3680
Swedish Krona	0.0409	0.0411
Italian Lira	0.0000	0.0000
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

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U.S. studies N. Korean response

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. officials said Saturday they were studying North Korea's response to a U.S. proposal aimed at resolving an escalating confrontation over the Asian country's nuclear capability.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, in Israel, was asked if the North Korean response made Friday at a meeting with U.S. officials in New York represented progress in the dispute.

"Of course, I'm at some distance from that, but the reports I have are there are some good things in their proposal but some difficulties and it's being studied in our government as to what the next steps would be," he said.

A U.S. official travelling with Mr. Christopher who declined to be identified said the response was getting "mixed reviews."

The New York Times reported in Sunday editions that U.S. officials were divided over North Korea's offer because access would still be denied to its two most sensitive sites at Yongbyon: A nuclear reactor and a nuclear reprocessing plant that can be used to separate plutonium for a nuclear bomb.

The Times, quoting administration officials, also said a cabinet-level meeting had been scheduled for Monday to try

and prepare a response to the offer.

The Friday meeting was requested by North Korea to give its formal response to an American proposal believed to include an offer of diplomatic recognition of Pyongyang, trade and other measures.

The Times said administration officials declined to discuss the plan but officials familiar with the proposal said it would work this way:

— Inspectors from the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would be given unlimited access to five of seven officially disclosed nuclear installations. But these are relatively minor sites, the newspaper said.

— The international monitors would not be allowed to conduct inspections at North Korea's nuclear reactor or its nuclear reprocessing plant, but the IAEA would be allowed to replace the film and batteries in cameras there. The agency has rejected that as insufficient.

— North Korea said it was willing to negotiate with the agency over greater access to the reactor and reprocessing site but did not offer anything specific.

A State Department official said North Korea's response was not a simple acceptance of the U.S. proposal and had to

be reviewed.

"We are studying it. We worked late last night. We're working today on that, and we'll be meeting again on Monday," Robert Gallucci, assistant secretary of state for political-military affairs, said on CNN's Newsmaker Saturday.

"When a conclusion is reached — and the president himself is focusing upon this — we'll decide where to go in consultation with our South Korean allies, and Japan certainly as well," he said.

He declined to go into details of the North Korean response except to say it was complex and does refer to inspections at some nuclear facilities.

Mr. Gallucci said the United States has yet to get from North Korea its acceptance of the necessary safeguards on its nuclear programme set by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Senator William Cohen, a Republican from Maine, criticized North Korea.

"I think we stand pretty much where we were a year ago. I think we have to look at their response with some scepticism. We seem to be getting some motion, but perhaps no movement at all," he said.

"The clock is ticking. Time is running out, and we'd better be prepared to have a series of

sanctions to put in effect in the event that they fail to fully comply," Sen. Cohen, a Senate Armed Services Committee member, said on the programme.

After months of negotiations, Pyongyang recently proposed its own package solution under which Washington would spell out concrete economic, military and political benefits that North Korea would gain in return for compliance with the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Meanwhile, a South Korean news agency said Seoul will stick to its demand that North Korea should resume dialogue with the South before holding talks with Washington over its suspected development of nuclear weapons.

Yonhap said Seoul considered the North's response to a U.S. proposal aimed at resolving the row was insufficient because it failed to express willingness to reopen dialogue with the South, suspended last month.

The Clinton administration has offered to renew high-level talks with North Korea only after two conditions are met: The resumption of inspections of the North's suspected nuclear sites by the IAEA and the opening of talks between the two Koreas on the creation of a nuclear-free Korean peninsula.



Astronauts end first space walk

HOUSTON, Texas (AFP) — Astronauts on the space shuttle Endeavour Sunday completed their first five space walks to repair the crippled telescope Hubble, successfully carrying out all three of their scheduled tasks. The sortie, which began at 0342 GMT and ended at 1130 GMT, lasted nearly eight hours instead of the six originally planned. An unexpected problem with closing a lateral door on the telescope caused the biggest headache for the two astronauts involved, Story Musgrave and Jeff Hoffman. They managed

to replace a pair of faulty gyroscopes in record time but it took them several attempts to get the five locking mechanisms to work on the door, which gave access to the gyroscopes. They also installed a new magnetometer, an instrument for measuring the Earth's magnetic field. The photograph shows astronauts Hoffman (left) and Musgrave (right) work on the aft section of the Hubble telescope as it sits in the shuttle's cargo bay (AFP photo)

Martial art club to help the blind use inner power

JAKARTA (AFP) — A club of Indonesian martial art is introducing the use of inner power to help blind people identify objects. The Antara News Agency said here Sunday. The club Merpati Putih or White Dove, plans to set up an institute in Yogyakarta to help blind people exercise their inner power to detect objects. Antara quoted a teacher at Merpati Putih Purwoto Hadi-purnomo as saying. Purwoto said by learning to use their visible vibrating power, blind people would be able to read and distinguish colours like sighted people. He showed journalists how three blind people trained in this way could roller skate, ride a bicycle and interact with moving obstacles without collision. He said the club had also proven that a trained blind soccer goal keeper could save 46 out of 50 kicks to his goal. There are about two million blind people in Indonesia.

Russian film voted European Film of the Year

POTSDAM, Germany (AFP) — The "Felix," European cinema's highest accolade, for European Film of the Year 1993 was awarded here to Russian director Nikita Mikhalkov for his film Ugra. It is the first time the European cinema Academy Award has gone to a director from the former Soviet Union. It was presented by German Director Werner Herzog and Britain's Stephen Frears at a gala evening in the Festsaal in the Babelsberg district of Potsdam. Ugra, set in the Mongolian steppes, is about the friendship of a Mongolian herdsman and a Russian worker and the clash between civilisation and a way of life closer to nature. The film received a Golden Lion Award at the 1991 Venice Film Festival. French actor Daniel Auteuil was voted the best actor for his role in "Un Coeur D'Hiver" directed by Claude Sautet (France), the best actress prize was awarded to Maia Morgenstern of Romania for Balanta by Romanian director Lucian Pintilie.

Polish violinist scoops French award

PARIS (AFP) — A 19-year-old Polish violinist won the 1993 24th International Marguerite Long-Jacques Thibaud Competition ahead of Australian and Chinese musicians. The jury, chaired by master violinist Yehudi Menuhin, awarded the 150,000 franc (\$25,000) first prize to Bartolomej Niziol, after hearing recitals from 37 violinists from 16 countries. The Pole also won the chance to play at five public concerts and cut a record. Second place was awarded to Australian Adele Anthony, 23, who won 60,000 francs, and third prize of 40,000 francs went to Yang-Ging Yu, 23, of China.

Hong Kong wins 8 awards in film festival

TAIPEI (AP) — Hong Kong captured eight awards and Taiwan won nine Saturday in the 1993 Golden Horse Film Festival. Jackie Chan of Hong Kong won the Best Actor Award for his role in Crime Story and Ng Kar Lai of Hong Kong won the Best Actress Award for her role in Remains Of A Woman. The Wedding Banquet, a Taiwanese movie about a homosexual man's marriage with a woman, won five awards, including Best Film, Best Director and Best Screenplay writer Ang Lee. Best Supporting Actor Lang Hsiang, and Best Supporting Actress Gwa Ah-Leh. The annual film festival is regarded as the equivalent of the Academy Awards for Chinese-language films outside mainland China.

Students arrested after egg hurling protest

LIVERPOOL, England (R) — University students hurled eggs at a British cabinet minister during a noisy protest against the Conservative government's plans to curb student grants. Two students were arrested after about 90 students staged the protest at Liverpool University in north-west England against Michael Portillo, chief secretary to the treasury, as he arrived to open a new university building. Police said, "Mr. Portillo decided to talk to the students. As he approached, several eggs were thrown at him," police said. Witnesses said one egg struck him on the back. The two students, a man and a woman, were charged with disturbing public order and were given a January court date.

Fate of neo-fascism hangs on Italian vote

ROME (R) — Italians voted Sunday in local elections that will decide whether neo-fascists stand a chance of returning to power half a century after the wartime collapse of dictator Benito Mussolini and his jackbooted black shirts.

Police headquarters ordered security forces out Sunday night to guard against any unrest when the outcome of the race, between the neo-fascists and the left becomes known soon after polls close at 10 p.m. (2100 GMT).

A police spokesman said Rome's old Jewish ghetto, the headquarters of political parties and the offices of the newspapers that took sides most

fervently in the election campaign would be kept under close surveillance.

"We will have squads of riot police ready to intervene at short notice in case of spontaneous demonstrations," he said.

Eight million Italians were able to vote to choose 129 city councils, but the eyes of the world are on Naples and Rome.

The neo-fascists MSI (Italian Social Movement) emerged as the single biggest party in both cities in a first round vote on Nov. 21 whose shock result, opening the prospect of even deeper political instability, sent the lira into a tailspin.

Alessandra Mussolini, the fascist dictator's 30-year-old granddaughter, is seeking to become mayor of Naples. MSI leader Gianfranco Fini is standing in the capital, where his party won 36 per cent of the vote two weeks ago.

The latest opinion polls, published Friday, showed Ms. Mussolini and Mr. Fini both running behind their left-backed rivals.

Far more than a mayor's seat is at stake in Rome and in the other local polls that are a dress rehearsal for the early general elections expected in the spring of 1994.

"If I win, the whole of Italian politics will change the

next day," Mr. Fini has insisted in every television debate.

Mr. Fini's message has been that winning in Rome would give the MSI a chance to enter government because it would show the neo-fascists had won over a conservative electorate orphaned by the collapse of scandal-tainted mainstream parties.

Throughout the campaign Mr. Fini, 41, has been at pains to distance the MSI from its fascist past, appealing to a "silent majority" of former centrist voters as the only man capable of stopping the Communists taking over Rome City Hall.

U.K. denies softening line on N. Ireland

LONDON (R) — Britain denied Sunday that Prime Minister John Major, working with Dublin in the search for peace in Northern Ireland, was ready to drop his demand that Ireland repeal its constitutional claim to the British-ruled province.

The Sunday Telegraph reported that Mr. Major was preparing to make the key concession and thus remove a major obstacle to agreement by London and Dublin on a joint statement aimed at persuading IRA guerrillas to lay down their arms.

Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd denied Britain was set to soften its long-standing demand that Dublin scrap a claim to a province Britain partitioned seven decades ago.

"There's been no softening on any point of principle," he told BBC Television.

A government official was blunter, dismissing the report by the pro-Conservative Party newspaper as "ill-informed nonsense."

Mr. Hurd said a 300-year-old union with Britain would not be broken against the will of the majority of people of Northern Ireland, where Protestants outnumber Catholics two to one.

"The principle here — and this is the key to the whole thing — is consent. What is crucial... is that both governments accept that what counts are the views of the people of Northern Ireland," Mr. Hurd added.

"Northern Ireland is part of

Russian reformers on track for gains as historic campaign enters final phase

MOSCOW (Agencies) — The Russian Communist Party is solidly in third place behind the two top pro-market reform parties in opinion polls a week ahead of a historic ballot to elect a new parliament and decide on a new constitution.

President Boris Yeltsin called the poll as he crushed an insurrection by Communist diehards in September, in a bid to purge lingering totalitarianism and enshrine Russian democracy in law.

As the campaign entered its final stage, the last opinion polls released before the Dec. 4 deadline for publishing surveys pointed to a comfortable margin of victory for two top democratic parties.

But virtually all surveys placed the Russian Communist Party solidly in third place, with the remainder of the pro-

jected vote on Dec. 12 scattered between various centrist, nationalist and special-interest parties.

With nearly a week remaining in what has proved a tumultuous, fast-shifting election campaign over the past month, pundits were reluctant to put forward detailed forecasts on the balance of power in the new legislature, the Federal Assembly.

Most agreed that the likely winners, pro-Yeltsin bloc Russia's Choice and another pro-market bloc led by economist Grigori Yavlinski, would not command a controlling majority and would be forced to enlist backing from other more moderate parties.

Many analysts have also predicted that, in the absence of a tradition of party loyalty in a multiparty system or a com-

Angolan rebels, government disagree on status of truce

LUSAKA (R) — The Angolan rebel movement UNITA insisted Sunday it had agreed a ceasefire with the government but the government in Luanda said more than two weeks of talks in the Zambian capital Lusaka had not produced any agreement.

The Angolan News Agency, Angop, quoted the government's chief negotiator, Faustino Muteka, as saying: "No understanding was reached, he was speaking on arrival in Luanda from Lusaka."

The agency quoted its sources in Lusaka as saying there had been "an understanding on some aspects of a ceasefire but not on the practical implications."

UNITA and the government have been at war for most of the time since independence from Portugal in 1975 and the death toll in recent fighting has been up to 1,000 a day.

In Lusaka, UNITA spokesman Jorge Valentim broke a news blackout imposed at the talks by U.N. mediator Alioune Blondin Beye and dis-

puted the government's account of events.

"There is no question of doubt that there was agreement reached on the ceasefire. This happened in a full plenary session... which was attended by observers from the United States, Portugal and Russia and Mr. Beye," he told Reuters. "Let's not be afraid of the ceasefire. Let's support it," he added.

Diplomats close to the talks said they too were puzzled by Mr. Muteka's denial of an agreement.

"I am rather surprised by what Muteka is saying. All issues pertaining to the ceasefire proper, minus the political questions which will be discussed later, were agreed upon first on Friday and then ratified on Saturday," a diplomat said.

Another source, also closely monitoring the closed-door talks, said: "It is difficult to see what can be gained when issues agreed upon are now somewhat being denied — that is if Mr. Muteka is being reported correctly."

Australian minister in Malaysia to talk trade despite row

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — Australian Trade Minister Peter Cook flew in Sunday for a regional business meeting in Malaysia saying he planned to deliver a speech on enhancing trade ties despite an escalating row between the two countries.

He declined to say if he had any message for Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad, who will open the conference later Sunday.

Mr. Cook is scheduled to present a paper Monday at the conference, which has been organised by a son of Mr. Mahathir.

The first Australian minister to visit since the row broke out when Australian leader Paul Keating called Mr. Mahathir a racist, Mr. Cook was besieged by reporters when he arrived at Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

"I am here at the invitation of the private sector in Malaysia for a trade conference," he said. "They have asked me to entitle my speech 'Collaborating for success,' and I intend to make a speech tomorrow which would set the right mood for the trade relations to be enhanced from this point on."

Asked if he had any message to give the Malaysian leader, Mr. Cook replied: "I think the seating arrangement is (for us

to sit) on the same table, let's see how it goes."

"The prime minister (Keating) appeared on the Sunday programme (on Australian Television) this morning and I think he said all that needs to be said about this," Mr. Cook said.

Mr. Keating said in the television interview, recorded Saturday, that he had done enough to heal the row and it was now up to Malaysia to show it wanted to get relations back on track.

Malaysia's Foreign Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Saturday that Mr. Keating's letter to Mr. Mahathir explaining the circumstances that led to his racist remark did not show any sign of repentance or regret and had worsened the situation.

Asked how he could talk about enhancing trade as diplomatic ties were being threatened by the row, Mr. Cook said: "They have invited me to come and deliver a speech... They have asked me (to talk about) how to increase the trade flows in the region and that is what I am going to respond to."

On whether Australia would take any new measures to mend fences, he said: "We have taken some steps. If you see what the prime minister said this morning, that does

distinctively rule off the whole affair."

"The important thing now is to get that behind us and to get on with the job of doing what we do best, and that is working with one another," he added.

Malaysia has warned of further action when the cabinet meets Wednesday. The Information Ministry has banned the airing of Australian television programmes and other government agencies have said they would review business ties with their Australian counterparts.

Asked if he would pick up the telephone and speak personally to Mr. Mahathir to patch the rift, Mr. Keating said: "I don't think so. I think I've said what I've wanted to say."

"I think what I've done is very reasonable," Mr. Keating said. "That is I've written to him putting (the remark) into some sort of context..." The text of the letter has not been released.

"I have made it quite clear I represent Australia's national interests, we have interests," Mr. Keating said.

"It's an honest, frank letter but the one clear message is that what I said was not calculated to offend him, and that's true, so therefore no offence was intended and I hope that he accepts, therefore, that none was taken," Mr. Keating

said.

"If my remarks were not intended to offend and he has taken offence at it, well naturally one would regret that."

Asked if he regretted using the word "racist" to describe Mr. Mahathir, Mr. Keating said: "Mr. Mahathir said that morning that he thought the best policy, to use his words, was to thumb his nose at people to be noticed."

"The word 'racist' was sort of a shorthand way of talking about the odd person out, or odd people out."

"But look, we want to put a line under the relationship and get on with it."

Mr. Keating noted that Mr. Cook and Defence Minister Robert Ray would be in Malaysia this week for previously planned visits to promote trade and cooperation.

"I mean it's very tangible evidence on our part we want to keep the relationship going and on a good footing," he said.

Asked if the rift would hurt Australia's attempts to integrate into Asia, Mr. Keating said: "I don't think it does."

Mr. Keating said Australia has had spats with Malaysia before — "or more particularly Malaysia has had spats with us."

He said he had a good relationship with other leaders in the region, including President

محز اصة اقص

Al Wihdat stays at top of Jordan soccer standings

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Former champions Al Wihdat and Al Ramtha Monday take on two ambitious teams, Al Fuheis and Al Arabi, as soccer's first division championship enters its eighth week.

Al Wihdat again topped the standings for now, however the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) might decide Monday to alter their wins over Al Baqaa, Sahab and Al Jazireh as it was revealed that a Wihdat player, who had received 4 bookings had played in these matches. If this turns out to be true, Al Wihdat will lose their top standing and drop out of the top-five.

In the past week, Al Arabi managed a 1-1 draw with Al Qadissieh and retained their spot among the top-five teams, while newcomers Al Fuheis remained in 6th place after losing to Sahab.

Al Qadissieh's goal was the

fastest one this week as Mustafa Adam netted in a header in the 2nd minute of the first half.

Al Arabi snatched the win away from their opponents when striker Ayman Al Omari scored the precious equaliser from a header three minutes before the end of the match.

Al Hussein and Al Baqaa played to a goalless draw in a match which saw wasted chances for both teams.

Al Baqaa, who are now in last place, missed a definite scoring chance when their shot hit the post. A win could have considerably advanced their standing to 7th.

Titleholders Al Faisali remained in second place after they managed a 2-1 win over 10th placed Al Jazireh.

Jamal Abu Abed scored Al Faisali's first goal from a powerful shot in the 43rd minute but Al Jazireh's key striker Tawfiq Al Sahab equalised from a penalty kick in the 52nd minute.

Khaled Awad scored Al

Faisali's winning goal in the 76th minute. Al Faisali will next face Al Baqaa Tuesday.

Al Wihdat scored a crucial 1-0 win over Al Ramtha as Firas Fawzi took advantage of a defensive error to score an easy goal for his team.

Al Ahli continued their impressive results and advanced to fourth place after a convincing 3-1 win over Al Yarmouk. Imad Fataftah opened scoring in the 17th minute, and his brother Khalil netted in the

second goal in the 31st minute. Khalil Fataftah secured his team's big win when he scored the third goal in the 59th minute.

Yarmouk's only goal came from striker Khaled Yousef in the 84th minute.

Earlier in the week, Sahab scored their first win after defeating Fuheis 2-0. Striker Mohammad Al Ashhab scored both goals in the 20th and 25th minutes.

STANDINGS AFTER 7TH WEEK

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Al Wihdat	7	5	1	1	10	2	16
Al Faisali	6	4	1	1	10	3	15
Al Ramtha	7	3	2	2	7	3	13
Al Ahli	7	3	2	2	11	7	13
Al Qadissieh	7	3	1	3	10	11	13
Al Fuheis	7	1	2	4	5	9	8
Al Baqaa	6	2	1	3	5	10	8
Al Jazireh	10	2	1	7	4	11	6
Al Yarmouk	5	2	1	3	6	7	6
Sahab	6	1	1	5	6	11	6
Al Arabi	7	1	1	5	6	10	4
Al Baqaa	6	1	1	4	2	8	4

Palestinians get ready for Lillehammer

LAUSANNE (AFP) — Palestinians are set to top the agenda when the International Olympic Committee meets here this week.

The Palestinian Olympic Committee is expected to brief the IOC Executive Committee on its work and its plan to send a delegation of observers to the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer in February.

The Palestinians, who joined the Olympic movement last September during the IOC ses-

sion in Monaco, are determined to be represented at Lillehammer, even if their presence is only symbolic.

Also on the agenda are progress reports from future Olympic host cities — Lillehammer, Atlanta, Nagano (winter 1998) and Sydney.

Delegates will also look at the Sports Arbitration Tribunal (TAS), and how it can be strengthened, and changes in the Olympic Solidarity Fund, which helps finance sports de-

velopment in poor countries.

The authority of the Swiss-based TAS is increasingly being called into question by athletes — such as American Harry "Butch" Reynolds and Germany's Katrin Krabbe — who contest sports federation decisions in civil courts.

IOC and federation officials currently see this trend as one of their biggest headaches.

As for the solidarity fund, there have been calls for

changes in the way the money is allocated — to reflect both the geopolitical changes in Europe and the increasing difficulties faced by African countries.

IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch has said at recent meetings in Dublin, with the European Olympic Committees, and in Harare, with the African Committee, that Olympic funding would be increased.

Ferguson laughs off Man. United setback

LONDON (AFP) — Manchester United's lead at the head of the English Premiership may have been cut to 12 points after their 2-2 draw against Norwich, but manager Alex Ferguson is unworried.

"I think I'll still sleep at night," he quipped after seeing his side drop two home points for the second consecutive game.

"Norwich played very well in the first half and we were lucky to come in 2-1 ahead, but in the second half we unlucky not to snatch it."

"Our problem was we didn't enjoy our leads long enough to force them out into the open. If we'd kept it nice and tidy for the first 10 minutes of the second half, we could have won it quite comfortably."

His main concern now is to negotiate a tough programme over the Christmas and New Year holiday.

"If we come out of that still with a healthy lead, then time's running out for the others," he said.

The result was a big lift for Norwich in the build-up to next Wednesday's UEFA Cup third round second leg tie in Milan, where they trail 1-0 to Inter.

"I don't think it will be any more daunting or intimidating than coming here," said Norwich manager Mike Walker. "I was delighted with our performance and that will give us a boost for next week."

"It was a fair result, but we played really well in the first half hour and were disappointed that we weren't 2-0 up at that stage. United, though, have too many good

players to try to keep quiet."

Leeds manager Howard Wilkinson refused to discuss the title race, even though it was his side who topped United's advantage with their 3-2 home win over Manchester City.

He said: "I'm not interested in Manchester United and gaining or losing points on them at this stage. It really doesn't concern me."

Brian Deane's winner with five minutes left Leeds unbeaten in 13 Premiership matches, but Wilkinson described his team's display as "a Jekyll and Hyde performance."

He reasoned: "You can't give away goals like that. I said at half time that if the players didn't make silly errors, the game was all over. But we dropped our guard, lost concentration and suddenly it was 2-2."

Arsenal manager George Graham was also critical of his team after their 1-0 defeat at Coventry City.

Graham said: "Coventry deserved it. There's no question about that. But it's very unusual to see a team with more desire than us. We have no complaints. The better team won."

"I was very disappointed at our performance. David Seaman had to make too many outstanding saves, which is an indication of how poorly we played."

Newcastle capitalised on Arsenal's slip-up to jump into third with a 2-1 win at Tottenham, who were downed by a double from Peter Beardsley. The 32-year-old striker, who

has been stuck on 49 England caps since Graham Taylor edged him out of the side, was promptly recommended for an international recall by Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan.

"I think Peter is certain to be the first name on the next England manager's team sheet," said Keegan.

"For nearly four years he's been ignored by England. That has been a terrible waste and a crime. Peter's work rate, stamina and enthusiasm never waver and if young players cannot learn from him, they must be thick."

Tottenham manager Ossie Ardiles joined in the praise for a player who arrived at St James' Park after the Argentinian had been replaced by Keegan.

"It was a very good goal from an outstanding player," he said. "I don't know if Peter is getting any better but he is certainly not getting any worse."

There was a similar double tribute for West Ham striker Lee Chapman after his brace of goals earned the Hammers' a 2-1 win at Wimbledon.

West Ham manager Billy Bonds said: "They were two good goals. He showed a lot of

patience with the second. He's a fit lad and gives us something a bit different, a big targetman."

Wimbledon boss Joe Kinneir added: "He's always been a bogey to us. The next time he moves to, we're going to kidnap him the night before the match."

Liverpool could have done with their top striker, Ian Rush, against Sheffield Wednesday, but Graeme Souness axed him and then saw his side crash 3-1.

Souness said: "I spoke to Rush before the decision. He's played in every game this season, but he's jaded and he needed a rest."

"We made things easy for Wednesday in the game because of the way we defended and that's what upset me the most."

Wednesday boss, Trevor Francis commented: "I was surprised Rush was out, but his manager knows his form. I just wish he'd taken Fowler out of it too. His goal was a bit special."

There was better luck for Liverpool's neighbours, Everton. They triumphed 1-0 over Southampton to add to Saints' problems.

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Stich steers Germany to Davis Cup triumph against Australia

DUESSELDORF, Germany (Agencies) — Former Wimbledon champion Michael Stich capped a year of outstanding achievement when he secured Germany's victory over Australia in the Davis Cup final in brilliant style Sunday.

Two weeks after he won the World Championship title and rose to number two in the world, Stich pulled out some brilliant shots from his repertoire to beat Richard Fromberg 6-4 6-2 6-2 to give the Germans an unbeatable 3-1 lead in the best-of-five final.

The Germans, a minor tennis power just 10 years ago, have now won the most prestigious event in men's team tennis three times in the last six years.

More importantly this year's triumph came without the services of Boris Becker who opted out of the event to concentrate on improving his world ranking.

Becker inspired Germany to their first two victories in 1988 and 1989.

But Sunday's triumph was masterminded by Stich who had an outstanding weekend. He both his singles matches as well as teaming up with Patrik Kuehnen to clinch Saturday's doubles against Wimbledon champions Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge.

Fittingly Stich, 25, who has been overshadowed by Becker so often, capped the triumph with a dominant performance on the clay court against Fromberg that sometimes defied belief in view of his hard year.

Becker will always be the king of German tennis in the public's mind because he was the first German to win Wimbledon and clinch the Davis Cup for the country.

But Stich, who did not play a part in the previous finals, stepped up onto his pedestal as a German tennis hero with

Sunday's performance.

He may not have Becker's charisma but he can match his compatriot with skill and determination.

"It was not so difficult today," Stich said. "But I played very well."

"I think maybe Richard (Fromberg) was a bit tired from his long match on Friday."

German captain Niki Pilić added: "Stich played like a world champion today. We needed luck but the team showed that they could take the pressure."

Stich made his 100-minute victory over Fromberg look like child's play in comparison to the drama of the first two days of the tie.

The 1991 Wimbledon champion had needed nearly three-and-a-half hours and five sets to beat Jason Stoltenberg in Friday's opening match before Fromberg levelled to 1-1 in a best ever Davis Cup comeback.

The seeds were sown for Germany's victory when Stich and his partner Patrik Kuehnen won the doubles to take a 2-1 lead into the final day.

Scenes of delighted pandemonium followed Stich's 1hr 40min win inside the Dusseldorf Trade Centre complex.

He disappeared under the arms of Pilić over the net and team-mates Patrik Kuehnen, Carl-Uwe Steeb and Marc Goellner rushed to join them on the red clay court built specially for the event.

The result was a bitter disappointment for Australia's experienced captain Neale Fraser who had been hoping that Stich, playing in all of the matches, would be jaded in his final clash.

Australia had been bidding to notch up their country's 27th win in the competition which



Germany's Michael Stich bends to reach a ball during the first single match of the Davis Cup final against Australia's Jason Stoltenberg in Frankfurt (AFP photo)

was launched 93 years ago in Boston when the United States whitewashed Britain.

Stich, who became world number-two after winning the ATP Championships in Frankfurt last month, played superbly and never gave Australia's top clay-court player any chance to manoeuvre.

The 6ft 3in Fromberg started well enough, producing some big kicking serves and some sharp volleys.

But he was clearly unsettled by two decisions in the fifth game when he was ordered to replay two points because of unsighted linesmen.

He lost concentration, dropped serve, and never looked likely to break back.

Stich completed the 37-minute first set with a flurry of service winners and when they changed round he had dropped only three points on serve and had rattled off three service games to love.

Worse was to follow for the 23-year-old Tasmanian, who came under immediate pressure at the start of the second set as the lanky 25-year-old German moved into overdrive.

The 1991 Wimbledon champion, cheered on by Mexican waves, stamping feet and deafening applause, surged 2-0 clear and his only moment of vulnerability appeared in the fourth game when Fromberg managed to earn two break points.

But Stich, unwilling to give anything away, slammed the door closed with two aces.

He raced on, breaking the demoralised Australian for the third time in the match to go 5-2 clear, and by the third set he was playing an exhibition match.

Fromberg again dropped his opening service game and it was clearly just a matter of time before Stich would put his opponent out of his misery.

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فيلم في 12:30

Yemeni president accepts Beedh's terms to end rift

ABU DHABI (Agencies) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh said in remarks published here on Sunday he would accept conditions set by his rivals in the south to end the country's political crisis.

"I announce for the first time that I unilaterally accept the 18 points presented by the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP)," Mr. Saleh told the United Arab Emirates (UAE) daily Al Khaleej.

His comments coincided with a report by the UAE newspaper Al Itihad that he would meet Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beedh in Amman soon to resolve their dispute, which has threatened the country's fragile unity.

Mr. Saleh said Mr. Beedh, who leads the YSP, and all other YSP leaders "should now sit at the negotiating table with their partners in the Yemeni coalition to work out a mechanism and timetable" for implementing reforms. He added that such talks would be "the ideal solution to the crisis."

The semi-official Al Itihad said King Hussein was involved in mediation efforts and expected Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beedh to meet in Amman.

"There is a strong possibility that the differences between the two sides will be solved following meetings between Jordanian officials and Yemeni leaders," it quoted a government official in Amman as saying.



Ali Abdullah Saleh



Ali Salem Al Beedh

Al Khaleej quoted a spokesman for Mr. Beedh as saying the vice president, who has refused to quit Aden in the south since Aug. 19, was ready to end his boycott of the authorities in Sanaa if Mr. Saleh agreed to withdraw troops from major cities, step up measures to stabilise Yemen and decentralise the government.

The demands were among 18 points which Mr. Beedh presented to Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) to defuse the crisis, caused by differences over the implementation of unification.

Asked if he was ready to go to Aden, Mr. Saleh said, "this could happen after Beedh takes the oath before parliament."

Mr. Beedh has refused to

take up his duties as vice president in Sanaa.

"The Yemen Socialist Party leadership must sit with their coalition partners round the negotiating table and work out a time frame for what they have agreed," Mr. Saleh added.

The crisis, accompanied by reports of illicit troop movement and arms smuggling and by gun attacks on members of Mr. Beedh's family, raised fears abroad that the union between North Yemen and South Yemen was in danger.

Southerners representing the YSP on Yemen's five-man ruling council have said their party is ready for a federation of the country's two halves, but the GPC says a retreat from full unity is unacceptable to them.

Estonian leader ends visit

AMMAN (Petra) — President of Estonia Lennart Meri and his wife left Amman for home Sunday and were seen off at the airport by their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor.

President Meri was accorded full farewell honours upon departure after talks with King Hussein on ways to bolster bilateral ties and regional as well as international affairs.

Seeing off the president and his entourage, which grouped a large trade delegation, were also His Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad and Her Royal Highness Princess Ghida Talal, Upper House Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, other officials and members of diplomatic corps in Amman.



Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor Sunday bid farewell to Estonian President Lennart Meri and his wife (Petra photo)

Youth sentenced to death for killing 9-year-old

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A 20-year-old youth has been sentenced to death after he was convicted of premeditated murder of his nine-year-old cousin in an incident that sent shockwaves through Amman early this year, informed sources said Sunday.

Police spokesmen confirmed that a death sentence was handed down to the youth, identified only as Y.K.J. after an Amman court found him guilty of first-degree murder.

But the spokesmen declined to elaborate, pointing out that the sentence was subject to a mandatory review and details of the affair could be revealed only after the sentence was either commuted or carried out.

The case drew particular attention because of the age of the victim and unfounded rumours that "childkillers"

were on the prowl.

But, as the court found, a family dispute, the nature of which was not clear, was behind the savage killing a few days before the 'Eid Al Adha feast.

According to the sources, the main evidence in the case was a confession by the youth that he had lured his uncle's son, Mohammad, to an isolated spot on the evening of May 25, and killed him by smashing his head with a rock.

There was no immediate confirmation of earlier reports that the boy was sodomised before his death.

Police officials said at the time of the discovery of the body said that there was enough ground to believe that the boy was sexually molested before his death.

Detailed findings of the court were not available.

The sentence was passed Thursday, after nearly two

months of hearings.

The mangled, bloodstained body of the boy, a fourth grader at Emir Faisal School in Russeifa in the northeast outskirts of Amman, was found buried under a pile of rocks between two tombs in the Schneller refugee camp cemetery on May 29, three days after the family notified that Mohammad was missing while running an errand in the market.

"The boy's face and head was smashed out of shape," according to a resident who saw the body before it was taken away by the authorities.

The boy was half-naked and signs indicated that he was dragged to his grave from about 100 metres outside the cemetery.

An empty can of beer was also found nearby, but, according to residents in the area, the suspected youth, who was arrested two days after the body was found, had

no record of drinking.

The youth was reported to have confessed during questioning.

According to the sources, the youth used to work with Mohammad's father, a construction worker, before falling out with him, triggering a family dispute. He was reported to have admitted in his confession that the killing of the boy was his way of exacting revenge.

Defence witnesses in the case included several cousins and relatives who testified that the youth was at a construction site at around the same time that forensic experts established as time of death, but their testimonies did not stand up in court.

None of the family members or relatives, who live close to each other in Russeifa, would comment on the case, indicating that tension and hostilities among some of its members ran high after the incident.

Tough ride seen for Cabinet in Parliament

(Continued from page 1)

While other deputies endorsed the peace negotiations with Israel on the condition that they produce a just and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, Mr. Riati, whose party rejects the peace process on ideological grounds, said the negotiations can only "lead to legitimising the (Israeli) occupation."

Mr. Riati's rejection of the peace negotiations with Israel was echoed by Deputy Hammam Said (Amman, Fifth District), who said the peace talks with Israel conflict with the teachings of Islam.

Dr. Said said that nobody has the right to give away any parts of Palestine because it belongs to the whole Muslim nation.

Dr. Said, described as a hawkish member of the IAF, rejected the Kingdom's 1989 decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank because, he said, the Constitution prohibits relinquishing sovereignty over any part of the Jordanian territory.

"The government relinquished this sovereignty when it signed the agenda (for peace talks) with Israel on Sept. 14," said Mr. Said, who withheld confidence from the government because, among other things, "it assassinated the free and honest will of the nation with its will which is not free and not honest."

Words of praise for the government were also heard during the session from deputies who hailed the fairness of the election and voiced acceptance of its domestic and foreign policy.

"The latest parliamentary elections were another achievement of the country which will win it more respect," said Deputy Mifteh Al Lawzi (Amman, Fifth District).

Mr. Lawzi said the government policy statement reflects orientations that aim at consolidating the democratic process and ensuring the stability of the country, adding that he supported the government's decentralisation programme.

"Our confidence that this government will abide by the basic principles of the nation and the higher values that prevail in our country make us give it confidence with no reluctance," said Mr. Lawzi.

"When we listened to and studied the Speech from the Throne which the government considered as its policy statement, we found that it constitutes a truthful and good beginning to a responsible political orientation," said Deputy Fawzi Al Zoubi (Ramtha).

Congratulating the government on the confidence of the King, Deputy Nawaf Al Qadi

(northern Bedouins) praised the abilities of members of the Cabinet and said it deserves a vote of confidence.

Leader of the 18-member National Action Front (NAF) Abdul Hadi Al Majali lauded the policy statement of the government, describing it as comprehensive and descriptive of the achievements of the government.

Mr. Majali praised the achievements of the government in holding the elections on time, beginning the decentralisation programme, reducing the foreign debt, and "the serious pursuit for achieving a comprehensive and just peace that would safeguard the interests of Jordan, complements the Arab position and supports the Palestinian people and its institutions in their choices that will gain them their right to self determination."

The Lower House will resume its debate Monday, with 62 more deputies expected to take the floor before the government responds to the speeches of the deputies and votes are cast.

Lawmakers fail to impress

(Continued from page 1)

Anani, minister of information and Prime Ministry affairs, said: "Parliament is no place to belittle people and one should criticise policies and not individuals as such."

Shahbaz Horani said that agreeing with the government or opposing it is part of democracy, "but one should avoid personal slander and not be hasty in judging people."

Falah Dahabseh, a spokesman for the Bani Shakhri tribes, said that although the

deputies were outspoken in addressing a number of issues, "the make-up of the previous Parliament was much stronger and political trends were more visible then."

Randa Kaware, wife of Salt Deputy Samir Kaware, said she was attending the sessions to "see how people react to what is happening in the country and get a feel of the pulse of the country, but in 1989, the sessions were more personally aggressive."

Somali dialogue stalled

ADDIS ABABA (Agencies) — Informal talks on Somalia stalled Saturday despite efforts by Ethiopia's president to get 12 Somali factions to work with their rival, warlord Mohammad Farrah Aideded.

"There is a halt in the talks for the time being," said Colonel Abdi Warsame Isak, leader of one of the 12 factions opposed to General Aideded.

However, Col. Warsame said he expected "a breakthrough in the next three or four days," perhaps after faction leaders meet face-to-face.

Col. Warsame spoke after faction leaders met for two hours with Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi.

The factions have rejected two of Mr. Meles' principal suggestions. The Ethiopian leader has proposed that the factions agree to another conference on reconciliation within Somalia, and appeal for the release of Gen. Aideded's aides detained by U.N. peacekeepers there.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Abdullah in N. Korea

TOKYO (AFP) — Prince Abdullah Ben Hussein has arrived in North Korea, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a dispatch monitored here Sunday. A reception was given by the ministry of people's armed forces for the Prince who arrived in Pyongyang on Saturday. KCNA said. Prior to the reception, the chief of the general staff of the North Korean People's Army General Choe Kwang-met with Prince Abdullah. KCNA said, without elaborating.

Israel wants multilateral body

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres proposed Sunday to set up a permanent secretariat to coordinate the multilateral track of the Middle East peace talks. The secretariat, to be sited in the Middle East, would oversee all projects for regional cooperation put to the five multilateral committees, the foreign ministry announced. Mr. Peres made the proposal to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during talks Sunday morning and he voiced support for the idea.

Cairo ready for dialogue

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian government is prepared to talk to Muslim fundamentalists opposed to violence, presidential adviser Osama Al Baz said in an interview published Sunday. "Any fundamentalist group which

accepts the constitution, pledges to abide by the law and does not resort to violence to settle differences is eligible to participate in the national dialogue," which would involve various political groups. Dr. Baz told the weekly Rose Al Youssef.

Islamists win Gaza elections

GAZA (R) — An Islamic bloc opposed to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord Saturday swept all nine seats in student council elections at the Islamic University in the occupied Gaza Strip, university officials said. The bloc, which supports the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, won 81 per cent of ballots cast by 2,091 male students, the officials said. Women students were to vote Sunday. The winning bloc called itself the Imaad Aqel list, named after the Hamas leader killed by Israeli troops on Nov. 24. The Fateh bloc won 10.6 per cent of the vote, the Islamic Jihad which opposes the agreement won 6 per cent and leftist radicals won 2.4 per cent.

Rabin wants to visit Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin said in an interview published here Sunday that he wanted to visit Japan in April when Israel completes its withdrawal of troops from the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Mr. Rabin made the remarks in an interview Saturday with Japan's Nihon Keizai Shimbun newspaper.

COLUMN

Clinton gets steamed when staff in disorganised

NEW YORK (R) — President Bill Clinton says he occasionally loses his temper when his staff is disorganised but adds that the trick to living in Washington is not to take criticism personally. "I don't think I should ever lose my temper but when I do it's because of some process screw-up," he told Time magazine in an interview in the upcoming edition to appear on newstands Monday. He added: "If there's something wrong with the way we're organised or something that keeps us from doing (our best), that's what drives me nuts." Mr. Clinton said he urged his aides to never permit the criticism of others to diminish "our self-image." He stated: "I think the trick (to) being in public life in this day and age, when there is always going to be a lot of clamour and criticism, is to be able to take all this criticism seriously, but not personally." Asked to comment on teenage pregnancies, Mr. Clinton said that he wanted to tell unmarried teenagers that it was wrong to have unwanted children. "We ought to say that this would be a lot better if babies were born to intact families," he noted. However, he said he did not want to see society send the message that it was better for pregnant women to have an abortion than to have the child.

Married Anglican clergy to enter Catholic Church

VATICAN CITY (AP) — About 200 Anglican clergy, including married priests, who oppose their church's decision to allow the ordination of women are to be admitted into the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican agreed Saturday. A meeting of bishops here approved a statement setting out five guidelines for the gradual conversion of Church of England clergy to Catholicism. About half of the 200 clergy are married and will be allowed to remain so, although they will be integrated into the Roman Catholic Church and will have to abide by its rules. A delegation from England and Wales, led by the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Britain, Cardinal George Basil Hume, held two days of talks with other Catholic leaders to hammer out the agreement. Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro Valls said: "The decisions which have just been taken will not hamper ecumenical dialogue." The statement highlighted there had been no discussion about the Catholic Church's vow of celibacy for priests, even though married Anglican priests will be able to remain priests and married after converting. Card. Navarro Valls said that the Anglican Church's synod decision in November 1992 to allow the ordination of women, was not the only reason why the clergy, including one bishop, had decided to quit. But "it was the straw which broke the camel's back," he added.

Cicciolina backs Mussolini

ROME (AFP) — Former porn star and deputy Cicciolina gave the thumbs up to fascist dictator Benito Mussolini's granddaughter Alessandra standing in mayoral elections in an interview published here Saturday. Alessandra Mussolini, she told the Italian press agency AGI, is "beautiful, intelligent and cute." Ms. Mussolini, a former model, is standing for the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement (MSI) in a runoff poll Sunday for the mayor of the southern city of Naples.

Stolen Khmer statue returned to Cambodia

PARIS (AFP) — A 12th century statuette stolen from Cambodia in the 1980s and later bought by a French art gallery was returned to the son of King Norodom Sihanouk at a special ceremony here. The 50-centimetre (20-inch) bust of a woman was bought in South East Asia by the Beurdeley Gallery and then sold in France to a foreign collector. But during customs formalities in 1982, the curator of the Guimet Museum, Albert Le Bonheur recognised the statue as belonging to the Angkor Museum. He alerted the gallery, which immediately refunded the foreign buyer. It was agreed to keep the statue in Paris until relations with Cambodia had stabilised.

Arafat contains internal crisis, but critics doubt his intentions

Lamis K. Andoni

BY CONCEDED to some of the reformist demands of his colleagues, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat has successfully contained a serious political crisis prior to his crucial meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Amman today.

But the power struggle, which has been intensified since the signing of the Oslo accord between Israel and the PLO in Washington on Sept. 13, is expected to continue as Mr. Arafat has practically retained his control over the decision-making process in the leadership.

Critics and supporters of Mr. Arafat's leadership style agree that although he has accepted four key demands, none of the decisions could practically end his monopoly over negotiations with Israel. "He was composed and accepted the demands as if they were his own," commented one senior PLO official in Tunis. "We are not sure whether it is a tactic to contain the mounting criticism or a genuine shift."

The four key demands that Mr. Arafat accepted during a PLO Executive Committee meeting in Tunis were the

following:

— Setting up a higher committee to supervise the negotiations with Israel.

— Discussing a legal draft as a basis for the structure of the Palestinian authority.

— Accepting the principle of selecting and appointing members of the negotiating teams and a suggested Palestinian National Authority (PNA) on the basis of political and professional expertise rather than personal loyalty.

— That any binding resolution should be approved by a majority of the PLO Executive Committee rather than informal decisions reached in the presence of Palestinian personalities and officials present as members of "the Palestinian leadership."

The fourth demand was triggered by Mr. Arafat's repeated successful tactic of calling for broad meetings described as leadership meetings to avoid alliances against him in the PLO Executive Committee and sometimes to even bypass the need to secure a quorum, especially when disgruntled members boycotted the sessions.

Mr. Arafat was about to succeed in pulling the same trick last week when he tried to marginalise four PLO Executive Committee members who boycotted the sessions

by inviting a "leadership" meetings that included nine representatives from the Israeli-occupied territories.

But the four, particularly Mahmoud Abbas, who signed the Washington accord, were firm in their refusal to attend until the session was "a proper and official PLO Executive Committee meeting."

Insiders say Mr. Arafat, by inviting personalities from the territories and by initially ignoring his colleagues' demands, was sending a clear message to critics that the situation had changed and he could rely on support from the loyalists in the Israeli-occupied territories — who are bound to gain a bigger role once Palestinian self-rule takes effect.

But Mr. Arafat backed down, partly to contain a bigger crisis and partly because he was aware that he could still keep the upper hand inside the organisation. As a result of the bickering in Tunis last week, however, the PLO Executive Committee has not had time to discuss in details its next immediate steps.

Therefore, when Mr. Arafat arrived in Amman on Sunday, many PLO Executive Committee members were not sure what he was exactly up to — whether re-

garding signing a draft economic agreement with Jordan, or the exact position that he will present to Mr. Christopher.

Mr. Abbas, according to PLO officials, was still not satisfied with the results of the Tunis meetings and he did not see any real change in the situation.

Mr. Abbas refused to join the new panel which will handle negotiations with Israel on details of self-rule.

ANALYSIS

The pressure on Mr. Arafat was stepped up in the last two weeks as his allies in the peace process grouped up in a "reformist movement" in a campaign to "democratise the decision-making process."

The movement, initiated by the Palestine's People Party (PPP) and later joined by the Palestinian Democratic Union (PDU), has demanded an end to Mr. Arafat's individual decisions and political appointments.

But some PLO officials counter that at least part of the supporters of the "reformist movement" are mainly trying to pressure Mr. Arafat to accept conditions set by the World Bank in financing Palestinian autonomy.

Concerns that the World

Bank and other foreign donors would try to strip the process of building of a Palestinian autonomy from its national and political dimensions have prompted many of Mr. Arafat's critics, including those within his Fateh group, not to join the reformist campaign.

Officials, who have been outspoken in criticising Mr. Arafat counter that the demands for reforms should not unnecessarily be equated with playing into the hands of any foreign power.

Mr. Arafat is replacing professionals and experts with ignorant people," charged Saleh Ra'afat from the PDU, also known as Fida.

It is still unclear how the PLO Executive Committee, whose powers have been rapidly eroding, would be able to control the selection and appointment of the negotiating teams.

Five members of the committee have presented Mr. Arafat with a detailed memorandum demanding the restoration of the role of the Executive Committee as the top-level decision-making body in the PLO.

The demands include an effective role for the Executive Committee in allocation of funds and appointments and that only committee

members should take part in its formal sessions or at least in decision-making.

Six out of the 18-member body have already resigned or suspended their participation in meetings in protest against the peace accord with Israel.

The withdrawals have further undermined the already weak PLO leadership body, which has been losing its role due to Mr. Arafat's individualistic style and partly due to the members' reluctance to impose a collective decision-making process.

Many in the PLO now blame Mr. Abbas and his associates for minimising the role of the committee by confining the decision-making process to a growingly shrinking inner circle at the expense of the committee itself.

"The circle was already becoming very small, but after the signing of the accord matters got worse as Arafat has decided to push aside Mr. Abbas himself," said one PLO official.

The debate over reforms in the PLO has succeeded in attracting the attention of many Palestinian intellectuals who basically oppose the peace accord with Israel, but are now considering "containing the damage" through the democratisation of the process.

But reformists and analysts concede that without serious progress that will bring about tangible results to the Palestinian people, support for the peace process and the implementation will be seriously undermined.

The opposition has dismissed the reformist movement as an "in-house struggle to split the pie" without addressing the essence of the accord with Israel.

Some PLO officials believe that Mr. Arafat moved fast to contain the crisis to preempt a potential coordination or convergence of interests between the reformists and the opposition, especially that many in the first category agree that the current performance of the PLO would only make good the predictions of the opposition — that the accord will lead to the consolidation of the Israeli occupation.

They expect Mr. Arafat's next move to be an effort to break up the reformist coalition by appeasing separate demands or at least the minimum of these demands and interests of the diverse parties and individuals who have so far endorsed the reformist demands.

"Arafat has bowed to the storm but has not retreated," said a senior PLO official in Tunis.

محز اصباتش